2
LEVEL

Tarbiyah Islamiyah

Islamic Education
Deeds of the Heart

Obeikan Education

ENGLISH EDITION

Tarbiyah Islamiyah

Islamic Education

Level 2

Deeds of the Heart

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Preface

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and blessings and peace be upon the noblest of the Prophets and Messengers, our Prophet Muhammad, and upon all his family and Companions. To proceed:

Islamic knowledge is one of the most important necessities that the Muslim needs in his life; the entire ummah, in its efforts to rebuild Islamic civilization, is in need of it. Hence the religious texts point out the importance of Islamic knowledge and its bearers. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Allah witnesses that there is no deity except Him, and [so do] the angels and those of knowledge - [that He is] maintaining [creation] in justice. There is no deity except Him, the Exalted in Might, the Wise}* [Aal Imran 3:18]. Ash-Shawkani رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: What is meant by those of knowledge here is the scholars of the Quran and Sunnah. And Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{and say, "My Lord, increase me in knowledge"}* [Ta-Ha 20:114].

In the hadith it says: **«Whoever follows a path seeking knowledge thereby, Allah will make easy for him a path to Paradise.»** Narrated by Muslim.

This series of textbooks comes to serve the community, with the aim of conveying Islamic knowledge by various methods and making it readily available to those who seek it. We hope that it will be another source of knowledge for academic programs and that it will be a support and help to those who want to acquire more Islamic knowledge and education, in an effort to achieve the main goal, which is to spread and instill sound Islamic knowledge on a sound academic foundation and in accordance with correct beliefs, based on the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, in a modern and easily-understood style. We ask Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ to grant us all beneficial knowledge, enable us to do righteous deeds, guide us and help us to be sincere in our efforts.

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The Zad
Academy Series

Tarbiyah Islamiyah

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Deeds of the Heart

Praise be to Allah, Who says: *{O you who have believed, fear Allah and seek the means [of nearness] to Him and strive in His cause that you may succeed}* [al-Ma'idah 5:35]. And blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah, who was supported with miracles, who ﷺ said: **«By Allah, I am the most mindful of Allah among you and the one who fears Him the most among you.»** Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

To proceed: As we can see, we are living through a crisis; in the current situation of the Muslim ummah, we need to be sincere to Allah and check our hearts and our intentions when we are trying to rectify the situation and find a way out of this crisis. There have been major Islamic projects which were established and grew strong, but then they failed because of a lack of sincerity, because of showing off and because of a lack of good intentions.

Bearing that in mind, we have produced this book, at this academic level, which speaks about the deeds of the heart, for such deeds form the basis of everything else, as they represent the criteria for the acceptance or rejection of deeds. This will motivate us to do good deeds without any hidden obstacles that could undermine our efforts.

The deeds of the heart bear immense fruit in this world and the Hereafter, because they form the secret to success in our efforts to pursue goals in both realms and those who attain them will be blessed, productive and faithful, and will be people who are described as good. Hence Ibn Abi Jamrah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: I wish that there were some scholars who could focus solely on teaching people how to check the intention behind their deeds, and who would give classes on how to develop the correct intention and nothing else.

What helps one to engage in Islamic work (da'wah) – after sincerity towards Allah – is putting one's trust in Him عَزَّوَجَلَّ. For whoever puts his trust in Allah will attain serenity and peace of mind, and will be able to persist in his da'wah efforts, taking measures that will lead to success, and shunning laziness, speculation and mythical notions.

Other deeds of the heart that help one to strive include contemplation and taking stock of oneself, which may help one to plan, avoid undue haste, correct one's course and strive to improve one's efforts.

What helps one to be productive is putting one's hope in Allah, fearing Him and loving Him, for there is nothing better to help one attain success and guidance than putting one's hope in Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, fearing Him, loving Him and feeling an attachment to His beautiful names and sublime attributes. Ibn al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said:

Putting one's hope in Allah is what motivates the believer in his journey towards Allah, makes that journey enjoyable, urges him to keep going and makes him committed to the course on which he has embarked. Were it not for hope, no one would be motivated to start his journey towards Allah, for fear alone does not motivate a person; rather what makes him start his journey is love, what alarms him is fear, and what motivates him is hope. End quote.

A person may develop in his heart some element of hope for help from people, which is problematic, but hardly anyone can be saved from falling into this error. Once you regard hope in Allah and hope in people as being equal, then you have fallen into shirk and drifted away from the path of salvation. But if you give precedence to seeking to please Allah rather than people, you will succeed and prosper, you will achieve great things in your life and your deeds will yield results.

One thing that will help you to be productive and do good is being content with Allah, being content with Islam and being content with His Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The one who strives with contentment in his heart will surpass greatly those who feel reluctant, and will be far more successful than others, for his efforts will be blessed. However, the soul (nafs) that constantly prompts one to do evil is one of the greatest obstacles that stand in the way of one's efforts, productivity, persistence and excellence. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has instructed us to purify the soul (nafs), restrain it from following its whims and desires, and to take stock of it. Taking stock of oneself is one of the most important deeds that one must focus on at a time when there are many distractions.

The time we are living in is akin to the days of patience of which the Prophet ﷺ spoke, for life is filled with troubles and many distractions that keep one from striving. We are faced with trials in our religious commitment, flaming desires and powerful doubts. Hence there is no gift greater and more effective than patience, for by means of patience we may overcome obstacles and free ourselves from distractions, so that they will not distract us and we will not feel weak in the face of these obstacles and succumb to them; rather we will persist in our efforts with clear vision, showing patience and putting our trust in Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. Thus we realize that we have a great need to learn about the deeds of the heart on the basis of which we may strive to attain our religious or worldly goals, until we are able to attain that which pleases Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ in the way He wants from His slaves. And Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ is the Source of strength.

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Deeds of the heart

1. Sincerity (ikhlas)
2. Mindfulness of Allah (taqwa)
3. Fear (khawf)
4. Hope (raja)
5. Love (mahabbah)
6. Patience (sabr)
7. Gratitude (shukr)
8. Piety (wara)
9. Contentment (rida)
10. Contemplation (tafakkur)
11. Taking stock of oneself (muhasabah)
12. Trust in Allah (tawakkul)

Sincerity (ikhlas)

Sincerity is the essence and spirit of worship, the criterion on the basis of which deeds are either accepted or rejected. It is the most important and most sublime of the deeds of the heart. It is the main message of the messengers عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ, as Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says: *{And they were not commanded except to worship Allah, [being] sincere to Him in religion}* [al-Bayinah 98:5] *{Verily, sincere devotion is due to Allah Alone}* [az-Zumar 39:3].

For all of these reasons, it is most appropriate to begin by talking about sincerity (ikhlas).

With regard to the meaning of the word ikhlas (translated above as sincerity), in Arabic one may use words derived from the same root to refer to something as pure, if it has not been mixed with anything, as in the verse in which Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says: *{And indeed, for you in grazing livestock is a lesson. We give you drink from what is in their bellies - between excretion and blood - pure milk [labanan khaalisan], palatable to drinkers}* [an-Nahl 16:66].

With regard to the meaning of ikhlas (sincerity) in Islamic terminology, Ibn al-Qayyim said: It means making one's intentions, when doing an act of worship, purely for Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ Alone.

One of the scholars said: It means that you do not want anyone to witness your deed except Allah, and you do not want anyone to reward you for it except Him.

The poet said:

If your deed is not purely for Allah Alone
Then no matter what effort you put into it, it will end in ruin
Sincerity is a condition for deeds to be accepted
So long as they are in accordance with the Quran and Sunnah

Sincerity is essential, and it is a condition of good deeds being accepted. Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ has enjoined His slaves to be sincere in many places in His Book, which indicates that it is definitely obligatory, and that it is a condition of good deeds being accepted, as Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says: *{... they were enjoined only to worship Allah with sincere devotion to Him}* [al-Bayinah 98:5].

The importance of the intention (niyyah): It is the basis and foundation of deeds, for the individual will be rewarded or punished according to his intention, and he will be resurrected according to his intention.

It was narrated that Umar ibn al-Khattab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Deeds are but by intentions, and each person will have but that which he intended.»** Agreed upon.

Yahya ibn Abi Katheer رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said: Learn how to form the right intention, for it is more important than the good deed.

The outcomes of sincerity include the following:

Acceptance of good deeds:

The Prophet ﷺ said: **«Allah does not accept any deed except that which is done sincerely for Him Alone, seeking His pleasure.»** Narrated by an-Nasai; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

Attaining reward and multiplication thereof:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«You will never spend anything, seeking thereby the pleasure of Allah, but you will be rewarded for it.»** Agreed upon.

Ibn al-Mubarak رحمه الله said: There may be a small righteous deed that becomes like a major deed (in reward) because of the intention, and there may be a major deed that becomes like a small deed (in reward) because of the intention.

Az-Zubayd al-Yami رحمه الله said: I like to have a sound intention in everything I do, even eating and drinking.

If you have a good intention, you may be regarded as having done good deeds even when you are unable to do them:

It was narrated that Anas ibn Malik رضي الله عنه said: The Prophet ﷺ said: **«There are people whom we left behind in Madinah, but we never traversed any mountain path or valley but they were with us; they were kept behind by valid excuses.»** Agreed upon. According to a report narrated by Muslim: **«…but they will share the reward with you.»**

Moreover, a poor man may attain the same reward as a rich man who gives in charity, if he has a good intention. It was narrated that Abu Kabshah al-Anmari رضي الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«The likeness of this ummah is that of four men: a man to whom Allah gave both wealth and knowledge, so he disposes of his wealth by spending it in appropriate ways; a man to whom Allah gave knowledge but did not give him wealth, so he says: If I had what this man has, I would do what he has done…»** And he ﷺ said: **«They will both be equal in reward.»** Narrated by Ahmad and Ibn Majah; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

Salvation from the Fire:

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{But the righteous one will avoid it, [He] who gives [from] his wealth to purify himself, And not [giving] for anyone who has [done him] a favor to be rewarded, But only seeking the countenance of his Lord, Most High, And he is going to be satisfied}* [al-Layl 92:17-21].

Negative consequences of failing to attain sincerity:

Entering the Fire on the Day of Resurrection:

Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ struck me on the knee and said: **«O Abu Hurayrah, there are three who will be the first of Allah's creation with whom the Fire will be stoked on the Day of Resurrection.»** They are: one who strove in jihad, or learned and taught, or spent his wealth, for the purpose of showing off and acquiring a reputation. This hadith was narrated and classed as hasan by at-Tirmidhi.

Non-acceptance of good deeds:

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ said: 'I am the least in need of having a partner. Whoever does a deed in which he associates someone else with Me, I will leave him to that which he associated with Me.'»** Narrated by Muslim.

The signs of sincerity include the following:

Having no desire for fame – not loving praise – being motivated to strive for Islam – hastening to do good deeds in the hope of reward – patience, forbearance and not complaining – being keen to conceal one's good deeds – doing righteous deeds far away from people's gaze – doing a lot of righteous deeds in secret – what one does in secret is greater than what one does openly.

Al-Fudayl رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: All that Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ wants from you is your intention and your purpose.

All of these are signs of sincerity. The Muslim should be cautious; whoever thinks that he is sincere, then he needs to examine his sincerity.

Zayn al-Abideen Ali ibn al-Husayn رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ used to carry bread on his back at night, to take it to the needy in the dead of night. He would say: Charity given in the dead of night extinguishes the wrath of the Lord. Some of the people of Madinah were living, not knowing where their sustenance came from, but when Ali ibn al-Husayn died, they stopped receiving that which would be brought to them at night, and they saw on his back the marks left by the sacks of flour that he used to carry to them at night. He used to sponsor one hundred families.

Ruling on intending to gain some worldly benefit when doing some deeds for the Hereafter:

This refers to doing a deed that is prescribed in Islam whilst also intending something permissible alongside seeking the pleasure of Allah, such as fasting for the sake of Allah, and also intending to maintain one's good health by fasting.

Other examples include:

Travelling for Hajj for the sake of Allah, whilst also intending to do some trade alongside pilgrimage.

Striving in jihad for the sake of Allah, and also intending to acquire some of the booty for the purpose of feeding one's wife and children.

Walking to the mosque, intending to draw closer to Allah thereby, whilst also exercising by walking.

Such intentions do not invalidate good deeds, but they may detract from their reward, to a level commensurate with the extent to which a person is focused on the worldly matter in his heart. The best is not to intend anything when doing such deeds except drawing closer to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, and the worldly benefit should be regarded as secondary to that.

The Arabic word riya (showing off) comes from the root ra'a (he saw); it refers to doing something in order to be seen by people.

This is a blameworthy characteristic and is one of the characteristics of the hypocrites, concerning whom Allah says: *{Indeed, the hypocrites [think to] deceive Allah, but He is deceiving them. And when they stand for prayer, they stand lazily, showing [themselves to] the people and not remembering Allah except a little}* [an-Nisa 4:142].

It was narrated that Abu Saeed رضي الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ came out to us when we were talking about the Dajjal. He said: **«Shall I not tell you about what I fear more for you than the Dajjal?»** We said: Yes indeed. He said: **«Hidden shirk, when a man stands and prays, and makes his prayer look beautiful, because he realizes that another man is watching him.»** Narrated by Ibn Majah; classed as hasan by al-Albani.

And he ﷺ said: **«What I fear most for you is minor shirk.»** They said: What is minor shirk, O Messenger of Allah? He said: **«Showing off. Allah عز وجل will say to them on the Day of Resurrection, when the people are requited for their deeds: 'Go to those to whom you used to show off in the [first] world, and see whether you find any reward with them.'»** Narrated by Ahmad; classed as hasan by al-Arna'ut.

Things that people think constitute showing off but they do not:

1. When a person does something for himself and people praise him for that. It was said: O Messenger of Allah, what if a man does something for himself and people love him for it? He said: **«That is a harbinger of glad tidings for the believer.»** Narrated by Ibn Hibban; the original report is in Sahih Muslim.

2. Becoming famous without seeking fame. For example, a scholar or seeker of knowledge who strives to teach people and educate them about their religion, and to answer their questions about matters that they do not understand, and thus attains some level of fame. He should not give up what he is doing on the grounds that he wants to avoid showing off; rather he must strive to make his intention sound and continue what he is doing.

Some people may see a man worshipping Allah with enthusiasm and they are motivated to worship Allah as he does. This does not constitute showing off, and if his intention in his worship is to seek the pleasure of Allah, he will be rewarded for it.

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Making sure one's clothes and shoes look good, and that one has a pleasant smell. None of that is regarded as showing off.

Concealing one's sins and not speaking of them does not come under the heading of showing off; rather we are required, according to Islamic teachings, to conceal our own faults and those of others. Some people think that it is necessary to disclose their sins in order to be sincere, but this is inappropriate and the one who thinks that has been deceived by Iblees, because telling other people about one's sins is more akin to encouraging sin and indecency among the believers.

5

When is doing a good deed openly prescribed, and when is it not prescribed?

With regard to doing good deeds openly and concealing them, there are three scenarios:

The first scenario: When the Sunnah in doing that deed is to conceal it, then he should conceal it, such as prayers at night (qiyam al-layl) and focusing with proper humility in prayer (khushu).

The second scenario: When the Sunnah in doing that deed is to do it openly, then he should do it openly, such as regularly attending Jumuah prayer and prayers in congregation, and speaking the truth openly.

The third scenario: When the deed may be done either in secret or openly. In that case it is Sunnah to conceal it for one who fears that he may be showing off by doing it, and it is Sunnah to do it openly for one who wants to set an example for people, such as giving voluntary charity. So if a person thinks that some element of showing off may enter his heart if people see him doing that, then he must conceal his charity. But if he thinks that people will follow his example in giving charity, and that he will be able to ward off any inclination to show off, then it is Sunnah for him to give his charity openly.

Activities

1. Quote some texts from the Quran and Sunnah – other than those mentioned above – about the importance of sincerity.

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2. There are serious consequences for failing to be sincere. Mention them, supporting what you say with evidence.

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3. Give a definition of showing off, explaining things that do not come under this heading.

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4. When is doing a good deed openly prescribed, and when is it not prescribed? Give examples other than those mentioned above.

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Being mindful of Allah (taqwa)

Being mindful of Allah (taqwa) is the best provision for the Hereafter. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And take provision [with you] for the journey, but the best of provisions is mindfulness of Allah [taqwa]. So be mindful of Me, O people of understanding}* [al-Baqarah 2:197]. It is the criterion for differentiating between people. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Verily, the noblest of you before Allah is the most mindful of Him among you [atqaakum]. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware}* [al-Hujurat 49:13]. It is the source of comfort at times of loneliness, a protector against punishment, and the means of reaching Paradise.

Because of its great importance and virtue, Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has commanded us to cooperate for the sake of attaining it, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And cooperate in righteousness and piety [taqwa]}* [al-Ma'idah 5:2]. Moreover, it is a means of attaining the pleasure of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

In linguistic terms, the root meaning of taqwa is protection.

With regard to its meaning in Islamic terminology, Talq ibn Habib said, when they asked him about taqwa: It means that you do an act of obedience to Allah, in accordance with the guidance of Allah, hoping for the reward of Allah, and you refrain from disobeying Allah, in accordance with the guidance of Allah, fearing the punishment of Allah.

So Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will not see you where He has forbidden you to be, and will not miss seeing you where He has instructed you to be. If He has forbidden you to sit in gatherings where His verses are rejected and mocked, He should not see you there. If He has enjoined you to be in the mosque to offer the five daily prayers and Jumuah prayer, He should not miss seeing you there. The poet said:

Abandon sins, major and minor, for that is taqwa
Act like one who is walking over thorny ground, and proceed with caution
Never think of a minor sin as little, for mountains are made of tiny pebbles

Umar ibn al-Khattab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ asked Ubay ibn Ka'b رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ about taqwa. He said: Have you ever had to walk on a path with thorns? He said: Yes. He said: What did you do? He said: I lifted up my garment and walked very carefully. He said: That is taqwa.

Ibn Mas'ud رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, concerning the meaning of the verse *{O believers! Be mindful of Allah in the way He deserves [attaqu Allaha haqqa tuqaatihi]}* [Aal Imran 3:102]: He should be obeyed and not disobeyed, He should be remembered and not forgotten, and He should be shown gratitude, not shown ingratitude.

Instruction to fear Allah and be mindful of Him (taqwa):

Allah has enjoined and instructed us to fear Him and be mindful of Him (taqwa) in more than one place in His Noble Book. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And We have instructed those who were given the Scripture before you and yourselves to be mindful of Allah [an ittaqu Allah]}* [an-Nisa 4:131].

Al-Qurtubi رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: The command to fear Allah and be mindful of Him is something that is universal and addressed to all nations.

One of the scholars said: This verse is the core of the entire Quran, because everything else revolves around it.

The Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ urged the Muslims to fear Allah and be mindful of Him. He said to Abu Dharr رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ: **«Fear Allah and be mindful of Him wherever you are. Follow a bad deed with a good deed; it will erase it. And have a good attitude when dealing with people.»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi; classed as hasan by al-Albani.

He also enjoined that when he bade farewell to his Companions, as he said: **«I advise you to fear Allah and be mindful of Him…»** Narrated by Abu Dawud and at-Tirmidhi; classed as hasan by al-Albani.

Fearing Allah and being mindful of Him is the way to become a close friend [wali] of Allah:

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Unquestionably, [for] the allies [awliya'] of Allah there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve, Those who believed and were mindful of Allah}* [Yunus 10:62-63] *{His [true] allies are not but those who are mindful of Him [al-muttaqoon], but most of them do not know}* [al-Anfal 8:34].

Becoming a close friend or ally [wali] of Allah is attained by doing righteous deeds, not by beating drums or doing any other innovated actions that have been introduced into the religion. Being able to fly or walk on water is not proof of being a close friend of Allah. It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Indeed Allah says: 'Whoever shows enmity to a close friend of Mine, I declare war on him. My slave does not draw closer to Me by means of anything more beloved to Me than that which I have enjoined upon him, and My slave continues to draw closer to Me by doing supererogatory deeds until I love him…'»** Narrated by al-Bukhari. This hadith indicates that being a close friend of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ can only be attained by doing righteous deeds in accordance with Islamic teachings.

Note: Many people refrain from doing some perfectly permissible actions, in which there is no element of haram at all, on the grounds that they are fearing Allah and being mindful of Him (taqwa). This is completely inappropriate, and the one who does that is wronging himself, because he is depriving himself of permissible things on the grounds that this is a kind of worship, but that is not a kind of worship at all.

If a person wants to fear Allah and be mindful of Him, then he must seek the knowledge that Allah has sent down to His slaves and not turn away from it. There is no piety (taqwa) without knowledge and following the teachings of Islam.

Levels of mindfulness of Allah (taqwa)

Allah has mentioned these levels in His Book, where He says: *{Then we caused to inherit the Book those We have chosen of Our servants; and among them is he who wrongs himself, and among them is he who is moderate, and among them is he who is foremost in good deeds by permission of Allah . That [inheritance] is what is the great bounty}* [Fatir 35:32].

According to this verse, there are three levels:

1 The one who wrongs himself

This is the one who affirms the oneness of Allah (Tawhid) and believes in the Messenger ﷺ, and he adheres to the pillars of Islam and faith, but he does not strive to protect himself from entering Hell at all, so he is careless about some obligatory duties and commits some prohibited actions. He is one of the sinners among those who affirm the oneness of Allah, who are subject to the will of Allah: if Allah wills He will pardon them, and if He wills He will punish them commensurate with their actions, until they are brought forth from the Fire at some future time.

But this does not mean that one should think little of sins. It was narrated from Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«Beware of sins of which people think little, for they may accumulate until they destroy a man.»** Narrated by Ahmad; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

2 The one who is moderate

This is the one who avoids everything that may be a cause of punishment in the Fire, even for a brief moment, but he does not compete to be foremost in doing good deeds. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{If you avoid the major sins which you are forbidden, We will remove from you your lesser sins}* [an-Nisa 4:31].

3 The foremost in doing good deeds

This is the best of these three levels. It refers to the one who does what is obligatory and avoids what is prohibited, and hastens to do good deeds. It does not mean that he never errs, for the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Every son of Adam is prone to error.»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah; classed as hasan by al-Albani.

And Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Those who avoid the major sins and immoralities, only [committing] slight ones. Indeed, your Lord is vast in forgiveness}* [an-Najm 53:32].

Characteristics of those who are mindful of Allah (al-muttaqun):

Those who are mindful of Allah have characteristics by which people may recognize them, some of which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has mentioned. These characteristics include the following:

1. **Striving to be truthful in word and deed.** Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And the one who has brought the truth and [they who] believed in it - those are the ones who are mindful of Allah [al-muttaqoon]}* [az-Zumar 39:33].

2. **Honouring the symbols of Allah and the rituals that He has prescribed.** Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{That [is so]. And whoever honors the symbols of Allah - indeed, it is from the piety [taqwa] of hearts}* [al-Hajj 22:32]. What is meant by honouring the symbols of Allah is respecting the sacred limits set by his Lord, so he does not transgress them, and respecting the commands of Allah, so he follows them in the proper manner.

3

Striving to be fair and just, and to rule on the basis of justice. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness [taqwa]. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do}* [al-Ma'idah 5:8].

4

Following the path of the prophets, those who are true and the doers of good, and walking in their footsteps. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{O you who have believed, fear Allah and be with those who are true}* [at-Tawbah 9:119].

The way to attain mindfulness of Allah (taqwa):

- **Asking Allah to make one mindful of Him**

  Frequently reciting the supplication (dua): **«Allahumma aati nafsi taqwaha wa zakkiha anta khayru man zakkaha (O Allah, grant my soul mindfulness of You and purify it, for You are the best to purify it)»** and other supplications.

- **Striving to rectify one's heart.** Awn ibn Abdillah said: "The key to mindfulness of Allah is having good intentions."

- **Striving to rectify one's outward actions,** by making them in accordance with the Sunnah and teachings of the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

- **Some of the ways of attaining mindfulness of Allah are:** patience, taking stock of oneself, modesty (hayaa), generosity, fasting and only eating food from halal sources.

The outcome of being mindful of Allah (taqwa)

All good is found in being mindful of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, as the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«You should be mindful of Allah, for it combines all that is good.»** Narrated by at-Tabarani in al-Kabeer; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

It was narrated from Abu Saeed al-Khudri رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that a man came to him and said: Advise me. He said: I asked the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ for the same as you have asked me, and he said: **«I advise you to be mindful of Allah, for that should come before everything you do.»** Narrated by Ahmad; classed as hasan by al-Albani.

The greatest consequences of being mindful of Allah (taqwa):

1

Admittance to Paradise and salvation from the Fire.

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{That is Paradise, which We give as inheritance to those of Our servants who were devout and mindful of Allah [man kaana taqiyyan]}* [Maryam 19:63].

The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«On the day Allah created the heavens and the earth, He created one hundred mercies, each of which could fill the space between heaven and earth. He allocated one mercy to be shared among all of creation, by virtue of which a mother shows compassion to her child, by virtue of which wild animals and birds drink water, and by virtue of which all creatures show compassion to one another. Then on the Day of Resurrection, He will limit it to those who were mindful of Him (al-muttaqun) and will bless them with ninety-nine more.»** Narrated and classed as sahih by al-Hakim.

2

Being regarded as noble in the sight of Allah.

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most mindful of Allah among you}* [al-Hujurat 49:13].

3

Happiness and well-being in this world and the Hereafter.

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Unquestionably, [for] the allies of Allah there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve, Those who believed and were mindful of Allah. For them are good tidings in the worldly life and in the Hereafter. No change is there in the words of Allah. That is what is the great attainment}* [Yunus 10:62-64].

Being guided to the truth, expiation of bad deeds, and attaining the grace and bounty of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{O you who have believed, if you are mindful of Allah, He will grant you a criterion and will remove from you your misdeeds and forgive you. And Allah is the possessor of great bounty}* [al-Anfal 8:29].

4

5

Abundant provision. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And whoever is mindful of Allah - He will make for him a way out, And will provide for him from where he does not expect}* [at-Talaq 65:2-3].

Having one's affairs made easy. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And whoever is mindful of Allah - He will make for him of his matter ease}* [at-Talaq 65:4].

6

7

Blessing (barakah). Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And if only the people of the cities had believed and been mindful of Allah, We would have opened upon them blessings from the heaven and the earth}* [al-A'raf 7:96].

There was a woman of the desert people who understood this, as she advised a son of hers who wanted to travel: I advise you to be mindful of Allah, for a little mindfulness of Him is more beneficial to you than a great deal of smartness.

Protection, well-being, support and a good end. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, the earth belongs to Allah. He causes to inherit it whom He wills of His servants. And the [best] outcome is for those who are mindful of Allah}* [al-A'raf 7:128].

8

It was narrated that al-Agharr Abu Malik said: When Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ wanted to appoint Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ as his successor, he sent for him and summoned him, so he came, and Abu Bakr said: I am asking you to take on something that is very difficult for the one who takes it on, so fear Allah, O Umar, by obeying Him, and obey Him by being mindful of Him, for the one who is mindful of Allah (al-muttaqi) is safe and protected.

9

Compensation with something better than what one gives up out of fear and mindfulness of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. It was narrated that Abu Qatadah and Abu'd-Dahma said: We came to a man of the desert people and he said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ took me by the hand and began to teach me some of that which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ taught him. He said: **«You will never give up anything out of fear and mindfulness of Allah but Allah will give you something better than it.»** Narrated by Ahmad; classed as sahih by al-Arna'ut.

The one who wishes to hasten the promise of Allah and thinks it is slow in coming should check himself first:

Has he truly attained mindfulness and fear of Allah (taqwa)?

Undoubtedly the one who does some obligatory actions and not others, and refrains from some forbidden things and not others, has not yet attained true mindfulness and fear of Allah.

So he must take stock of himself, then he must adhere to mindfulness of Allah in order to attain those outcomes.

Activities

1. **Based on your studies, speak about the outcomes of being mindful of Allah (taqwa).**
2. **Quote some verses from the Quran that attest to the high status and importance of being mindful of Allah.**
3. **Describe briefly the characteristics of those who are mindful of Allah (al-muttaqun).**

Fear (khawf)

How often is fear the cause of releasing a person from being a prisoner of his desires. How often has fear made one who defiantly disobeyed his parents give up his sin. How often have the slaves of Allah wept out of fear of Him. How often is one who is journeying towards Allah accompanied by fear on his journey. How many lovers of Allah have irrigated the earth with their tears. By Allah, how great is fear to the one who understands the importance of this deed of the heart. *{Only those fear Allah, from among His servants, who have knowledge. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Forgiving}* [Fatir 35:28].

In Arabic, the word khawf (fear) means alarm and panic; it is the opposite of amn (safety, security).

In Islamic terminology, khawf (translated here as fear) refers to expecting something bad to happen, or expecting to miss out on something that one loves, on the basis of either conjecture or certainty.

The word khawf may be used with regard to matters of this world or of the Hereafter.

The word khashyah (also translated as fear) has a stronger meaning than the word khawf. Ibn Uthaymeen رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: Khashyah is khawf (fear) that is based on knowledge of the greatness of the One Whom you fear and of His perfect power and authority.

Fearing Allah is obligatory.

Fearing Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ is one of the most important and greatest obligations of Islam, because of the significant outcomes to which it leads.

Fearing Allah, to the exclusion of all others, is one of the conditions of faith. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has commanded us to fear Him Alone and to venerate Him, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{That is only Satan who frightens [you] of his supporters. So fear them not, but fear Me, if you are [indeed] believers}* [Aal Imran 3:175].

And Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{and fear [only] Me}* [al-Baqarah 2:40].

{And remember your Lord within yourself in humility and in fear} [al-A'raf 7:205].

{But as for the one who feared standing before his Lord and restrained himself from base desires…} [an-Nazi'aat 79:40].

{For him who fears standing before his Lord there will be two gardens} [ar-Rahman 55:46].

Thus fear of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ is one of the most important principles of Islam, without which faith is not valid. It is the foundation of mindfulness of Allah (taqwa) and of wisdom.

Al-Hasan رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: The believer combines good deeds and fear, whereas the hypocrite combines bad deeds with a feeling of being secure.

Ibn al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: The status of fear is one of the greatest stages on the road, and one of the most beneficial for spiritual well-being. It is obligatory for everyone.

The status of fear of Allah (khawf)

Fear of Allah (khawf) is a sign of sublime status, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Only those fear Allah, from among His servants, who have knowledge. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Forgiving}* [Fatir 35:28].

Hence the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ attained the highest level thereof, as he said: **«I am the one among you who is most mindful of Allah and fears Him the most.»** Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Fear of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ unseen is one of the most sublime of statuses. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{O you who have believed, Allah will surely test you through something of the game that your hands and spears [can] reach, that Allah may make evident those who fear Him unseen. And whoever transgresses after that - for him is a painful punishment}* [al-Ma'idah 5:94]

{You can only warn one who follows the message and fears the Most Merciful unseen. So give him good tidings of forgiveness and noble reward} [Ya-Seen 36:11].

People fall into different categories in terms of fearing Allah:

The first category is those who are foremost and closest to Allah. They are the ones whom fear of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ motivates to hasten to do good and to draw closer to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ by doing obligatory and supererogatory deeds, being aware of Him, and avoiding prohibited and dubious things. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ praises them, as He says: *{Indeed, they who are apprehensive from fear of their Lord, And they who believe in the signs of their Lord, And they who do not associate anything with their Lord, And they who give what they give while their hearts are fearful because they will be returning to their Lord, It is those who hasten to good deeds, and they outstrip [others] therein}* [al-Mu'minun 23:57-61].

The second category is those who follow a middle course. These are the ones whom fear of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ motivates to avoid prohibited things and to do what is obligatory. They are the righteous who are following a middle course.

The third category is those Muslims who are negligent and wrong themselves. Basically they fear Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ in such a way that prevents them from committing major shirk or sins that nullify Islam, and makes them refrain from some major sins, but because of the low level of their fear of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ they commit some major sins and omit some obligatory duties – Allah forbid. They are sinners who deserve punishment commensurate with what they have fallen into of infractions, but they are still regarded as being within the bounds of Islam.

The fourth category is those who go to extremes in fear of Allah. They are the ones whose intense fear of Him prompts them to fall into a type of despair of Allah's mercy. They are sinning and going to extremes, because it is not permissible for the believer to despair of the mercy of Allah.

Types of fear (khawf):

1. Fear of Allah's wrath and of being deprived of His pleasure. This is the fear of those who love Him. There is only one cause for the wrath of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, namely disobedience of Allah, because if a person avoids acts of disobedience and sin, he will not be punished.

   Hence Ali ibn Abi Talib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: There are five things that you must learn, and if you rode camels in pursuit of them you would exhaust the camels before you found any words as useful as what I am going to tell you: a person should not fear anything but his sin, and should not put his hope in anything except his Lord…

2. Fear of punishment in this world and the Hereafter. This fear is always present in the believer's heart. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ said, concerning the attributes of the believers: *{And those who are fearful of the punishment of their Lord; Indeed, the punishment of their Lord is not that from which one is safe}* [al-Ma'arij 70:27-28].

   For example, every sin for which there is a warning of divine curses and wrath is a cause of great fear. How many people have suffered torment and agony for years because of being cursed once for a major sin they committed and thought little of it, and they forgot and were heedless, and failed to repent from their sin, and thus never had any reprieve from their torment.

3. Fear of missing out on reward. The one who strives hard hopes for the reward of his actions, and fears that his efforts may be rendered worthless by something he does, thus causing him to lose what he hoped for of immense reward.

There is nothing that the righteous fear more than shirk, because it renders all good deeds worthless, and the one who commits this sin is not forgiven, no matter how great his knowledge and worship. How can it be otherwise, when Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ said to His Prophet: *{And it was already revealed to you and to those before you that if you should associate [anything] with Allah , your work would surely become worthless, and you would surely be among the losers}* [az-Zumar 39:65]? And He says of His Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ: *{But if they had associated others with Allah, then worthless for them would be whatever they were doing}* [al-An'am 6:88].

Outcomes of fearing Allah:

1. **Knowledge and insight.** Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Is one who is devoutly obedient during periods of the night, prostrating and standing [in prayer], fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Lord, [like one who does not]? Say, "Are those who know equal to those who do not know?" Only they will remember [who are] people of understanding}* [az-Zumar 39:9].

2. **Being foremost in doing good.** Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, they who are apprehensive from fear of their Lord, And they who believe in the signs of their Lord, And they who do not associate anything with their Lord, And they who give what they give while their hearts are fearful because they will be returning to their Lord, It is those who hasten to good deeds, and they outstrip [others] therein}* [al-Mu'minun 23:57-61].

3. **Being enabled to have power on earth.** Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And those who disbelieved said to their messengers, "We will surely drive you out of our land, or you must return to our religion." So their Lord inspired to them, "We will surely destroy the wrongdoers And We will surely cause you to dwell in the land after them. That is for he who fears My position and fears My threat"}* [Ibrahim 14:13-14].

4

Being safe on the Day of Resurrection. It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ narrated that his Lord عز وجل said: **«By My Glory, I shall not let My slave feel fear in two realms or feel secure in two realms. If he fears Me in the first world, I shall grant him security on the Day of Resurrection, and if he feels safe from Me in the first world, I shall cause him to feel fear on the Day of Resurrection.»** Narrated by Ibn Hibban; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

5

Being saved from the Fire. It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«No man will enter the Fire who weeps out of fear of Allah, until the milk goes back into the udder.»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

6

Attaining the pleasure of Allah. Allah عز وجل says: *{…Allah being pleased with them and they with Him. That is for whoever has feared his Lord}* [al-Bayinah 98:8].

7

Being shaded with the shade of the Throne. In the hadith about the seven whom Allah will shade with His shade on the Day when there will be no shade but His, it mentions among them: **«… a man who was pursued by a woman of status and beauty, but he said: "I fear Allah"»** Agreed upon.

8

Enjoying bliss and delight in Paradise. Allah عز وجل says: *{For him who fears standing before his Lord there will be two gardens}* [ar-Rahman 55:46] *{who forsake their beds, calling upon their Lord with fear and hope, and spend out of what We have provided for them. No soul knows what is kept hidden in store for them of delight as a reward for what they used to do}* [as-Sajdah 32:16-17].

Means of developing fear (khawf) of Allah:

1

Remembering the majesty and might of Allah. He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says concerning His might: *{They have not given due recognition to Allah. On the Day of Resurrection, the entire earth will be in His grip, and the heavens will be rolled up in His Right Hand. Glorified and exalted be Allah far above the partners they ascribe to Him!}* [az-Zumar 39:67].

It was narrated from Ibn Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا that the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ recited this verse one day on the minbar, then he said: **«Allah glorifies Himself: 'I am the Compeller (al-Jabbar), I am the Supreme (al-Mutakabbir), I am the Sovereign (al-Malik), I am the Almighty (al-Aziz), I am the Most Noble and Generous (al-Kareem)'.»** And the minbar shook with the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, until we thought that it would collapse with him on it. Narrated by Ahmad; classed as sahih by al-Arna'ut.

2

Bringing to mind the standing before Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, which will inevitably come to pass. Whoever reflects upon this standing and fears it in this world will increase in fear of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{But as for the one who feared standing before his Lord and restrained himself from base desires, verily paradise will be his abode}* [an-Nazi'aat 79:40-41].

3

Listening to the Quran, hadiths, exhortation and khutbahs. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Allah has sent down the best statement: a consistent Book wherein is reiteration. The skins shiver therefrom of those who fear their Lord; then their skins and their hearts relax at the remembrance of Allah . That is the guidance of Allah by which He guides whom He wills. And one whom Allah leaves astray - for him there is no guide}* [az-Zumar 39:23].

4

Calling upon Allah in supplication (dua). One of the supplications of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was: **«Allahumma iqsim lana min khashyatika ma yahulu baynana wa bayna ma'aseeka (O Allah, grant us a share of fear of You that will prevent us from committing sin).»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi; classed as hasan by al-Albani.

In another supplication, he said: **«Allahumma wa as'aluka khashyataka fi'l-ghaybi wa'sh-shahadah (O Allah, I ask You to enable me to fear You in private and in public).»** Narrated by an-Nasai; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

5

Remembering Allah a great deal (dhikr). For heedlessness hardens the heart, and the heart of the heedless person will continue to harden little by little, because of the stain that covers it, until his heart becomes sealed and no rebuke or exhortation will affect it. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{and do not obey one whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follows his desire and whose affair is ever [in] neglect}* [al-Kahf 18:28].

6

Keeping away from things that make one feel safe from the plan of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. There are impediments that prevent one from developing fear of Him, such as sins, love of this world and its adornments, bad company, heedlessness, becoming desensitized to sin, procrastination, and so on.

Activities

1. **What are the means of developing fear of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ?**

.....

.....

2. **Why are the scholars and those who have knowledge the people who fear Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ the most?**

.....

.....

3. **Write an essay listing examples of ways in which the early generations (the salaf) feared Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.**

.....

.....

Hope (raja)

Hope is inspiration that energizes a person in his journey towards Allah. It makes the journey to Him enjoyable, urges the person to continue and helps him to stay the course. Were it not for hope, no one would start this journey, for fear alone does not motivate a person; rather what motivates him is love, what alarms him is fear and what inspires him is hope.

In linguistic terms, the word raja means hope and expectation.

In Islamic terminology, it refers to the connection with Allah that raises a person's hope of attaining Allah's bounty and pleasure in this world and the Hereafter.

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says of His Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and his Companions: *{You see them bowing and prostrating [in prayer], seeking [and hoping for] bounty from Allah and [His] pleasure}* [al-Fath 48:29].

The opposite of hope is despair, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{and despair not of relief from Allah. Indeed, no one despairs of relief from Allah except the disbelieving people}* [Yusuf 12:87].

The one who is striving in his journey towards his Lord should bear in mind two things:

1. He should think of himself and his faults and bad deeds, and that will create fear in him.
2. He should think of the vastness of Allah's mercy and grace, and that will create hope in him.

The difference between hope and wishful thinking:

With wishful thinking comes laziness, and it does not prompt a person to strive hard.

With hope comes striving and putting one's trust in Allah in the best manner.

- The one who strives to obey Allah and hopes for His reward, or repents from sin and hopes for His forgiveness, is the one who truly has hope.
- The one who hopes for mercy and forgiveness without obedience or repentance is the one who is engaging in wishful thinking, and his hope is false.

Al-Hasan رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: There are people who were distracted by their wishful thinking until they departed from this world without having done any good deeds. One of them says: I think positively of my Lord, but he is lying. If he truly thought positively of his Lord, he would do righteous deeds.

Outcomes of hope

Hope causes the Muslim to frequently remember Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, call upon Him, and to acknowledge his desperate need for Him and for His immense bounty and generosity. The more hope he has, the more he will do acts of worship and persist in them.

Hope makes the Muslim content with the decree of Allah and expect that Allah will have mercy on him, pardon him and help him to recover from any slips.

Hope makes the Muslim persist in doing acts of worship, regardless of how circumstances change.

Hope saves a person from the wrath of Allah, for the one who has hope persists in asking of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Indeed the one who does not ask of Allah, He will be angry with him.»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

Means of developing hope:

- Remembering the blessings of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.
- Remembering how Allah has previously bestowed blessings upon a person.
- Remembering Allah's promise of great reward and His immense generosity.
- Remembering the vastness of Allah's mercy, for His mercy precedes His wrath.
- Learning and understanding the beautiful names and sublime attributes of Allah that are connected to hope.

The believer should always be between fear and hope:

Al-Ayni said: In this regard, two groups went astray. One group gave precedence to hope and exaggerated about it, and another group gave precedence to fear and exaggerated about it. The way of the followers of truth, Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah, is to combine both fear and hope in equal measure.

Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله said: Fear of Allah should always be accompanied by hope. Were it not for that, one would despair of His mercy. By the same token, hope should always be accompanied by fear, otherwise one would become complacent.

In order to achieve a high level of worship, one should combine both fear and hope. Whoever does that, Allah's mercy will be close to him.

One of the practices that help one to attain that is bringing to mind both the reward and punishment. It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: **«If the believer knew what there is with Allah of punishment, no one would ever hope for His Paradise, and if the disbeliever knew what there is with Allah of mercy, no one would ever despair of His Paradise.»** Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

It was narrated that Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: **«Paradise is closer to one of you than the strap of his sandal, and the Fire is equally close.»** Narrated by al-Bukhari.

This dictates that one should have both fear and hope at the same time, and one should not make one of them supersede the other.

The scholars said: Whoever worships Allah on the basis of love alone is a heretic; whoever worships Allah on the basis of fear alone is a Haroori (i.e., a Khariji); whoever worships Allah on the basis of hope alone is a Murji; whoever worships Allah on the basis of love and fear and hope is a believer who affirms the oneness of Allah.

Based on that, what motivates one to do good deeds is three things: love, fear and hope. Whoever loves Allah will obey Him; whoever fears Allah will obey Him; whoever hopes for the reward of Allah will obey Him. Perfection means combining these three, so a person obeys Allah out of love for Him, out of fear of Him, and out of hope for His reward and grace.

But there are some cases in which it is appropriate to give precedence to hope and other cases in which it is appropriate to give precedence to fear.

Cases in which it is appropriate for a person to give precedence to hope over fear include the following:

When one is dying

This is mentioned in the hadith of Jabir رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, who said: I heard the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ say, three days before he died: **«No one of you should die except when he is thinking positively of Allah.»** Narrated by Muslim.

Hence one of the early generations instructed his sons, when he was dying, to recite to him the verses that speak of mercy, so that his soul would depart when he was thinking positively of Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ, hoping that Allah would forgive him, have mercy on him and accept him.

When someone despairs of the mercy of Allah because of his sins.

Cases in which it is appropriate for a person to give precedence to fear over hope include the following:

1. Living a life of extreme ease and luxury.
2. Committing sin.
3. Feeling safe from the plan and punishment of Allah.

Fear, desire (for Paradise) and hope are acts of worship that bring one closer to Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ. Fear of Allah motivates a person to keep away from sin and forbidden things. Desire and hoping for Allah's Paradise motivate a person to do righteous deeds and everything that pleases Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ. Hence Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ enjoins these acts of worship in one's journey towards Him عَزَّ وَجَلَّ, as He عَزَّ وَجَلَّ says: *{And invoke Him in fear and aspiration. Indeed, the mercy of Allah is near to the doers of good}* [al-A'raf 7:56].

Allah also praised His Prophets when He said: *{Indeed, they used to hasten to good deeds and supplicate Us in hope and fear, and they were to Us humbly submissive}* [al-Anbiya 21:90].

In other words, they were hoping for His Paradise and fearing His punishment.

Allah mentioned together the warning and the glad tidings, fear and hope, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{[O Muhammad], inform My servants that it is I who am the Forgiving, the Merciful And that it is My punishment which is the painful punishment}* [al-Hijr 15:49-50].

Allah described the situation of His Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: *{Say, "Indeed I fear, if I should disobey my Lord, the punishment of a tremendous Day"}* [al-An'am 6:15].

The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ constantly sought refuge with Allah from the Fire, and instructed every Muslim to do likewise in every prayer. It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«When one of you has finished reciting the final tashahhud, let him seek refuge with Allah from four things: from the punishment of Hell, from the punishment of the grave, from the trials of life and death, and from the evil of the Dajjal.»**

Narrated by Muslim.

In fact, the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ instructed all the Muslims, after every adhan, to ask Allah for al-waseelah for him, which is a high station in Paradise. It was narrated from Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-As رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا that he heard the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ say: **«When you hear the muadhdhin, then say something like he says, then send blessings on me, for whoever sends blessings on me, Allah will send blessings tenfold on him. Then ask Allah to grant me al-waseelah, for it is a status in Paradise that only one of the slaves of Allah will attain, and I hope that I will be the one. Whoever asks for al-waseelah for me will be granted intercession.»**

Narrated by Muslim.

The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ always asked Allah, in his supplication, for Paradise and that which brings one closer to it of words and deeds, and he sought refuge with Allah from the Fire and that which brings one closer to it of words and deeds. Many texts of the Quran encourage the Muslim to seek Paradise and warn him about the Fire.

The Sufi stance on fear and hope:

As for what some of them say – "We do not worship Allah out of fear of His Fire or out of hope for His Paradise; rather we worship Him out of love for Him" – this statement is incorrect and is contrary to the religious texts of the Quran and the sahih Sunnah. There is no contradiction between love of Allah and fear of His punishment and hope of His reward, because according to Ahl as-Sunnah, worship as prescribed in Islam is based on love and veneration; love leads to hope of His reward and veneration leads to fear of His punishment.

The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ used to ask Allah for Paradise and seek refuge with Him from Hell, and he taught his Companions رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ to do likewise. Thus the scholars and devoted worshippers learned that, generation after generation, and they never thought that this undermined their love for their Lord, may He be exalted, or their worship of Him.

Activities

1. Hope and fear are two important aspects of servitude to Allah (ubudiyah). Speak about them. What is the attitude of the believer concerning them?

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2. From what you have studied, write an essay speaking about the Sufi way of worshipping Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, and refute them.

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3. Other than what is quoted above, quote some texts from the Quran and Sunnah that mention fear and hope together.

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Love (mahabbah)

The joy and delight of the lover is in obeying his beloved, unlike the one who obeys because he has no other choice, who offers his service reluctantly, and thinks that if it were not for the fact that he is under the subjugation of his master and vulnerable to his punishment, he would not have obeyed him, and thus he puts up with obeying Allah like one who is compelled by his subjugator and subduer. As for the lover who regards obedience to his beloved as nourishment, pleasure, delight and joy, he is the one who strives relentlessly and does not get tired, and he is the one who will be blessed in this world and the Hereafter.

In Arabic, the word mahabbah (translated here as love) refers to the inclination of the heart towards something and feeling a constant attachment to it and longing for it.

In Islamic terminology, mahabbah refers to the inclination from the depths of one's heart towards Allah, and giving Him precedence over others.

Ruling on love of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ:

According to the teachings of Islam, loving one's Lord is obligatory for everyone, and no one fails to do that except one who wronged himself, is ignorant or is doomed.

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Say, [O Muhammad], "If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and jihad in His cause, then wait until Allah executes His command. And Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people"}* [at-Tawbah 9:24].

Thus Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ warns them against giving precedence to love of others over love of Him and His Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and such a warning can only be issued with regard to something that is obligatory.

It was narrated from Anas ibn Malik رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«By the One in Whose hand is my soul, no one of you truly believes until I am more beloved to him than his father, his child, and all the people.»** Agreed upon.

Ibn Rajab said: It is well-known that love of the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is connected to, and subordinate to, love of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. Thus the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is only loved as a result of Allah's love for him, and because of Allah's command to love him, obey him and follow him. If faith cannot be attained except by giving precedence to love of the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ over love for oneself, one's children, one's parents and all the people, then what do you think about love of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ?

Ways of attaining Allah's love for you and of attaining love for Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ:

Ibn al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ stated that the ways of attaining Allah's love for you and of attaining love for your Lord are ten:

1. Reading Quran and reflecting upon its meanings and what is intended by it.
2. Seeking to draw close to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ by doing supererogatory acts of worship after doing the obligatory acts of worship, as is mentioned in the hadith qudsi: **«… and My slave continues to draw closer to Me by means of supererogatory deeds until I love him.»** Narrated by al-Bukhari.
3. Constantly remembering Allah in all situations, in one's words, in one's heart, in one's actions and in all circumstances, for one's share of love will be commensurate with that.
4. Giving precedence to what Allah loves over what you love when you feel overwhelmed by whims and desires.
5. Reflecting upon the divine names and attributes and trying to see their impact on people, and enjoying reflecting on their various meanings and aspects.
6. Thinking of Allah's kindness, generosity and blessings, both visible and hidden.
7. The most amazing of these means is feeling humble and helpless before Allah.
8. Being alone with Him at the time when He descends at the end of the night and reciting His Book, then concluding that with prayers for forgiveness and repentance.
9. Sitting with those who sincerely love Allah, and benefitting from their beneficial words. Not speaking except when you think there is a purpose to be served and you know that it will have a good impact on you and others.
10. Keeping away from anything that could form a barrier between you and Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Ibn al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: By means of these ten things, the lovers of Allah went through the stages of love and were admitted to the court of the Beloved.

The signs of a person's love for Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ include the following:

His love for the word of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

It was narrated that Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: Whoever would like to know whether he loves Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, let him think to himself about how he feels about the Quran. If he loves the Quran, then he loves Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, for the Quran is the word of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Sufyan ibn Uyaynah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said: By Allah, you will not attain the pinnacle of this matter until nothing is more beloved to you than Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. Whoever loves the Quran loves Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Outcomes of loving Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ

1 Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will love you.

It was narrated from Aisha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ sent a man on an expedition; that man used to recite for his companions in the prayer and would always conclude with Surat al-Ikhlas *{Qul Huwa Allahu Ahad}*. When they returned, they mentioned that to the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and he said: **«Ask him what makes him do that?»** So they asked him, and he said: Because it is a description of the Most Gracious, and I love to recite it.

The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Tell him that Allah loves him.»** Agreed upon.

2 The angels and the inhabitants of heaven and earth will love him.

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«When Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ loves someone, He calls out to Jibreel: 'Allah loves So-and-so, so love him.' So He loves him, and Jibreel loves him, and he calls out to the inhabitants of heaven: 'Allah loves So-and-so, so love him.' So the inhabitants of heaven love him, then he will be accepted on earth.»** Agreed upon.

3 He will taste the sweetness of faith.

The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«There are three characteristics, whoever attains them has found the sweetness of faith: when Allah and His Messenger are dearer to him than all else, when he loves a man and does not love him except for the sake of Allah, and when he would hate to return to disbelief as he would hate to be thrown into the fire.»** Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

4 Salvation from the fire.

As Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{But those who believe are stronger in love for Allah. And if only they who have wronged would consider [that] when they see the punishment, [they will be certain] that all power belongs to Allah and that Allah is severe in punishment}* [al-Baqarah 2:165].

The punishment is for those who do not love Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ; as for the believers, they give precedence to love of Allah over love of all else, so they will attain salvation from punishment.

Activities

1. **Explain the ruling on love, quoting evidence from the Quran and Sunnah.**

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2. **You have seen above means of attaining Allah's love. Think of some more means of attaining His love.**

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3. **From what you have studied about love, mention the most important thing that may be understood from this hadith: «There are three characteristics, whoever attains them has found the sweetness of faith.»**

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Patience (sabr)

The believer needs patience when complying with Allah's commands, he needs patience when refraining from what is prohibited, and he needs patience in order to accept the divine decree.

As he will be dealing with one or more of these three at all times, he needs patience constantly until death; this is one of the most essential matters, for life cannot be sound without it. This is the efficacious remedy for every problem.

In linguistic terms, sabr (translated here as patience) means restraint. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And keep yourself patient [by being] with those who call upon their Lord in the morning and the evening, seeking His countenance}* [al-Kahf 18:28].

What is meant is: Keep yourself with them.

In Islamic terminology, sabr means restraining the nafs (self) from pursuing what it loves and desires, and restraining it from panicking, and forcing it to maintain its focus on sublime matters.

Ruling on patience (sabr):

Patience (sabr) is obligatory according to the consensus of the Muslim ummah. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ enjoins it in more than one place in His Noble Book, as He says: *{And seek help through patience [sabr] and prayer}* [al-Baqarah 2:45].

{persevere and endure [isbiru wa saabiru]} [Aal Imran 3:200].

{And be patient [wa isbir], [O Muhammad], and your patience is not but through Allah} [an-Nahl 16:127].

Patience is mentioned a great deal in the Quran, in different ways:

1. Praise for those who are patient, as in the verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{and [those who] are patient [wa's-saabireen] in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous}* [al-Baqarah 2:177].

2. Allah has made it incumbent upon Himself to love those who are patient and steadfast, as we see in the verse in which He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And Allah loves the steadfast [as-saabireen]}* [Aal Imran 3:146].

3. Allah has made it incumbent upon Himself to be with those who are patient; this "being with" is of a special kind, and includes protecting them, helping them and supporting them, as mentioned in the verses: *{and be patient. Indeed, Allah is with the patient}* [al-Anfal 8:46] *{And Allah is with the patient}* [al-Baqarah 2:249].

4. Allah has made it incumbent upon Himself to reward them according to the best of their deeds, as He says: *{and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do}* [an-Nahl 16:96].

5. Allah guarantees victory and reinforcement for them, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Yes, if you remain patient [in tasbiru] and conscious of Allah and the enemy come upon you [attacking] in rage, your Lord will reinforce you with five thousand angels having marks [of distinction]}* [Aal Imran 3:125]. By the same token, the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«You should understand that victory comes with patience.»** Narrated by Ahmad; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

6. Allah tells us that attaining what you seek and love, being saved from what you dislike and dread, and being admitted to Paradise can only be achieved by means of patience, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And the angels will enter upon them from every gate, [saying] "Peace be upon you for what you patiently endured. And excellent is the final home"}* [ar-Ra'd 13:23-24].

7. Allah tells us that only those who are patient will benefit from signs and lessons, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ said to Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: *{And We certainly sent Moses with Our signs, [saying], "Bring out your people from darknesses into the light and remind them of the days of Allah." Indeed in that are signs for everyone patient and grateful}* [Ibrahim 14:5].

8. Patience enables the patient person to attain leadership. Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said: "By means of patience and certain faith, leadership in religion may be attained. Then he recited the verse: *{And We made from among them leaders guiding by Our command when they were patient and [when] they were certain of Our signs}* [as-Sajdah 32:24].

The status of patience

The status of patience in relation to faith is like that of the head in relation to the body. The one who has no patience has no faith, just as the one who has no head has no body.

In Sahih Muslim it is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: **«How wonderful is the affair of the believer, for his affairs are all good, and this applies to no one but the believer. If something good happens to him, he is thankful for it and that is good for him. If something bad happens to him, he bears it with patience and that is good for him. And that is only for the believer.»**

And he ﷺ said to the black woman who suffered from epilepsy and asked him to pray for her: **«If you wish, you may be patient, and Paradise will be yours, or if you wish, I will pray to Allah to heal you.»** She said: I will be patient. She said: But I become uncovered; pray to Allah that I will not become uncovered. So he prayed for her. Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Umar ibn al-Khattab رضي الله عنه said: The best life we lived we attained through patience.

Types of patience

1 **Patience in remembering Allah, obeying Allah, calling upon Allah, being steadfast in adhering to His religion and striving in His cause, and patience in seeking guidance and knowledge.**

Allah عز وجل says: *{O you who have believed, let not your wealth and your children divert you from remembrance of Allah}* [al-Munafiqun 63:9].

{So worship Him, and remain constant and patient in worshipping Him} [Maryam 19:65].

{And enjoin prayer upon your family [and people] and be patient therein} [Ta-Ha 20:132].

2 **Patience in refraining from sin,** meaning that you restrain yourself from committing haram actions even when the means of doing so are readily available, as happened to Yusuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ with the wife of al-Aziz. The wife of al-Aziz sought to seduce him in a situation when it would have been very easy for him to comply with her wishes, because she closed the doors and said, "Come, you," calling him to her. But he said, **"Indeed, he is my master, who has made good my residence. Indeed, wrongdoers will not succeed."** In other words: if I betray my master by committing sin with his wife, I will be a wrongdoer. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ said: *{And she certainly determined [to seduce] him, and he would have inclined to her had he not seen the proof of his Lord}* [Yusuf 12:24]. So he did not do that, even though there was a strong motive and no impediments. This is patience in refraining from disobeying Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

In as-Sahihayn, in the hadith about the seven whom Allah will shade with His shade on the Day when there will be no shade but His, it mentions among them: **«… a man who was pursued by a woman of status and beauty, but he said: I fear Allah.»**

3 **Patience in the face of calamity and in accepting the divine decree.** Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will reward a person for that by compensating him, praising him, having mercy on him and guiding him. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{but give good tidings to the patient Who, when disaster strikes them, say, "Indeed we belong to Allah , and indeed to Him we will return"}* [al-Baqarah 2:155-156].

Among the advice that Luqman gave to his son, he said: *{O my son, establish prayer, enjoin what is right, forbid what is wrong, and be patient over what befalls you. Indeed, [all] that is of the matters [requiring] determination}* [Luqman 31:17].

It was narrated from Umm Salamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا that she said: I heard the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ say: **«There is no Muslim who is stricken with calamity and says what Allah has commanded him to say, 'Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return; O Allah, reward me for my affliction and compensate me with something better' – but Allah will compensate him with something better.»**

She said: When Abu Salamah died, I said: Who among the Muslims is better than Abu Salamah…? Then I said it, and Allah compensated me with the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Narrated by Muslim.

And the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Patience is only when the calamity first strikes.»** Agreed upon.

Outcomes of patience

1

Gifts and abundant goodness, than which there is nothing better. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«No one is ever given a better and more expansive gift than patience.»** Agreed upon.

2

Patience brings illumination. It was narrated that Abu Malik al-Ash'ari رضي الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«Prayer is light, charity is proof, patience is illumination and the Quran is evidence, for you or against you.»** Narrated by Muslim.

Hence when Allah spoke of the most important signs in the universe, in the surahs Ibrahim, Luqman, Saba and ash-Shura, He ended that by saying: *{Indeed in that are signs for everyone patient and grateful}*; in other words, no one sees the signs or is illuminated by their light, except those who are patient and grateful.

3

Success, victory and attaining what one seeks. Allah عز وجل says: *{O you who have believed, endure and be more patient (than your enemy), and remain stationed and fear Allah that you may be successful}* [Aal Imran 3:200].

{And seek help through patience [sabr] and prayer} [al-Baqarah 2:45].

It was narrated that Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه said: The Prophet ﷺ said: **«...victory comes with patience.»** Noted above.

4

Attaining the love of Allah عز وجل. Allah عز وجل has connected His love to patience and has granted it to those who are patient. He says: *{And how many a prophet [fought and] with him fought many religious scholars. But they never lost assurance due to what afflicted them in the cause of Allah , nor did they weaken or submit. And Allah loves the steadfast}* [Aal Imran 3:146].

5

Forgiveness and multiplied reward. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Except for those who are patient and do righteous deeds; those will have forgiveness and great reward}* [Hud 11:11]. *{Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account}* [az-Zumar 39:10].

6

Paradise and the house of praise. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will reward the believers with Paradise for their patience, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Peace be upon you for what you patiently endured. And excellent is the final home}* [ar-Ra'd 13:24].

The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would pass by Yasir and Sumayah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا when they were being tortured by the disbelievers of Quraysh, and he would say to them: **«Patience, O family of Yasir, for you are promised Paradise.»** Narrated by al-Hakim; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

Concerning patience in the face of calamity, the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: 'My believing slave has no reward with Me, if I take away his beloved among the people of the world, then he seeks reward with Me for this loss, except Paradise.'»** Narrated by al-Bukhari.

According to the hadith of Abu Musa al-Ash'ari رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ about the one who lost his son and bore his loss with patience, it says: **«So Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: 'Give My slave news of a house in Paradise, and call it the house of praise.'»** Narrated and classed as hasan by at-Tirmidhi.

Activities

1. **On the basis of what you understand about patience, why is it the most expansive gift that a person may be given?**
2. **How do you understand the status of patience in the light of this verse:** *{O you who have believed, endure and be more patient (than your enemy), and remain stationed and fear Allah that you may be successful}* [Aal Imran 3:200]**?**
3. **Explain this hadith: «Patience is only when the calamity first strikes.» What impact does that have on a person's faith?**

Gratitude (shukr)

Because faith consists of two halves, gratitude and patience, it is incumbent upon the one who cares about himself and seeks salvation and gives precedence to his well-being not to ignore these two principles and not to choose any path other than these two direct paths. He should base his journey towards Allah on these two paths, so that on the Day he meets Him, Allah will make him among the people of Paradise.

In linguistic terms, the Arabic word shukr (gratitude) is the opposite of kufran (ingratitude); it refers to acknowledging favours and kindness, and speaking of them.

In Islamic terminology, shukr means acknowledging kindness and speaking of it.

Thus gratitude (shukr) means having love in the heart for the Bestower of blessings, striving hard to obey Him, and speaking words of remembrance and praise of Him.

Ibn al-Qayyim رحمه الله said: Whoever acknowledges blessings, acknowledges the Bestower of blessings, affirms blessings and shows humility to the Bestower, loves Him and is pleased with Him as his Lord and is pleased with His blessings, and uses the blessings in ways that He loves and in obedience to Him – this is the one who is truly grateful for the blessings.

An example of that is prayer, for it combines three types of gratitude (shukr), as follows:

- Gratitude in the heart, with what it involves of sincerity and humility.
- Gratitude on the lips, with what it involves of reciting Quran and remembering the Most Gracious.
- Gratitude manifested in physical actions, with what that involves of prostration, bowing and saying the tasleem at the end of the prayer.

The difference between praise (hamd) and gratitude (shukr):

- Praise (hamd) is only verbal, in contrast to gratitude (shukr), which may be spoken on the lips, felt in the heart and manifested in physical actions, as Allah عز وجل says: *{"Work, O family of David, in gratitude." And few of My servants are grateful}* [Saba 34:13].
- Praise may be in response to a blessing or not, in contrast to gratitude, which can only be in response to a blessing.

What gratitude involves: gratitude involves three things.

1. **Acknowledging the blessing bestowed by Allah.**
2. **Being pleased with it,**

   as the Prophet ﷺ said: **«He has succeeded who becomes Muslim, is granted sufficient provision, and Allah makes him content with what He has given him.»** Narrated by Muslim.

3. **Praising Allah.**

   Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{But as for the favor of your Lord, report [it]}* [ad-Duha 93:11].

   That is done by mentioning the blessings that Allah has bestowed upon you, and letting their impact be seen on you. It was narrated from Abu'l-Ahwas, that his father said: I came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, looking scruffy and unkempt, and he said: **«Do you have wealth?»** I said: Yes. He said: **«What kind of wealth?»** I said: All kinds: camels, slaves, horses and sheep. He said: **«If Allah has given you wealth, then let it be seen on you.»** Narrated by Ahmad, an-Nasai and at-Tirmidhi; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

Ibn al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: It is obligatory to be grateful to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ on the basis of reason, Islamic teachings and common sense. The obligation to be grateful to Allah is the most obvious of all obligatory deeds. How can it not be obligatory for people to praise Him, affirm His oneness, love Him, remember His favours and kindness, venerate Him, magnify Him, show humility to Him, speak of His blessings, and affirm them by all possible means? Gratitude is the most beloved thing to Him and the greatest in reward; it is for that purpose that He created creation, sent down the Books and prescribed laws; that required the creation of means and causes through which gratitude could be more perfect.

Gratitude is one of the most important obligations required of the Muslim. So he should learn about it, reflect upon it, and make sure that he shows gratitude to Allah in all possible ways. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{So remember Me; I will remember you. And be grateful to Me and do not be ungrateful}* [al-Baqarah 2:152].

And Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says with regard to showing gratitude to Him and to one's parents: *{Be grateful to Me and to your parents; to Me is the [final] destination}* [Luqman 31:14].

And He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says with regard to showing gratitude to Him for blessings: *{That they may eat of His fruit. And their hands have not produced it, so will they not be grateful?}* [Ya-Seen 36:35].

And He عَزَّوَجَلَّ said with regard to giving thanks to Him for guidance: *{[Allah] said, "O Moses, I have chosen you over the people with My messages and My words [to you]. So take what I have given you and be among the grateful"}* [al-A'raf 7:144].

Allah explained that worship is connected to gratitude; whoever is grateful is a worshipper of Allah, and whoever is not grateful is not a worshipper. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{O you who have believed, eat from the good things which We have provided for you and be grateful to Allah if it is [indeed] Him that you worship}* [al-Baqarah 2:172].

Ruling on being ungrateful for the blessings of Allah

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ condemns ingratitude for His blessings, and states that it is one of the causes of His punishment. He says, criticizing one who expresses ingratitude for blessings at the time of hardship and trials: *{And if We give man a taste of mercy from Us and then We withdraw it from him, indeed, he is despairing and ungrateful}* [Hud 11:9].

He condemns the one who is ungrateful – that is, the one who focuses on calamities and forgets blessings – as He says: *{Indeed mankind, to his Lord, is ungrateful}* [al-Adiyat 100:6].

The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ criticized women who show ingratitude for kind treatment, and stated that they will be among the people of Hell, as he said: **«I was shown Hell, and I saw that most of its inhabitants are women, for they are ungrateful.»** It was said, Are they ungrateful to Allah? He said, **«They are ungrateful to their husbands and ungrateful for good treatment. If you are kind to one of them for a lifetime, then she sees one (undesirable) thing from you, she will say, 'I have never seen anything good from you.'»** Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Ruling on showing gratitude to people:

Islamic teachings enjoin us to show gratitude to people for their kindness and favours to us. One of the most important things that are enjoined upon us is gratitude towards parents. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Be grateful to Me and to your parents}* [Luqman 31:14].

The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ enjoined expressing gratitude to everyone who does you a favour. According to the hadith of Jabir رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Whoever is given something and has the means to reciprocate, let him do so. If he does not have the means, let him praise him for it, for whoever praises him has thanked him, and whoever conceals [the gift] has shown ingratitude towards him.»** Narrated by Abu Dawud; classed as hasan by al-Albani.

Gratitude to people is mentioned alongside gratitude to Allah. It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«He does not thank Allah who does not thank people.»** Narrated by Abu Dawud; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

What this hadith means is that if someone is ungrateful by nature, and denies the favours that people do for him, then by nature he will also be ungrateful towards the Creator of people.

Means that help one to show gratitude

Bearing in mind the blessings of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Ash-Shawkani said: Bearing in mind the blessing is a means that prompts one to be grateful for it.

And Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And if you should count the favors of Allah, you could not enumerate them}* [an-Nahl 16:18]. *{And whatever you have of favor - it is from Allah}* [an-Nahl 16:53].

Al-Ghazali said: If someone does not think that the reward for a calamity is more significant than the calamity itself, it is unlikely that he will be grateful for the calamity.

Looking at those who are less well off than you.

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And it is He who has made you successors upon the earth and has raised some of you above others in degrees [of rank] that He may try you through what He has given you}* [al-An'am 6:165].

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Look at the one who is below you, and do not look at the one who is above you, then it is more likely that you will not scorn the blessings that Allah bestows upon you.»** Narrated by Muslim.

Realizing that you will be questioned about blessings.

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Then you will surely be asked that Day about worldly bounties}* [at-Takathur 102:8].

People misunderstand this issue, so they deprive themselves of the enjoyment of worldly bounties lest they be questioned about them on the Day of Resurrection, when Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has allowed us to enjoy worldly bounties, but He has commanded us to give thanks for them, as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{O you who have believed, eat from the good things which We have provided for you and be grateful to Allah if it is [indeed] Him that you worship}* [al-Baqarah 2:172].

Knowing that Allah loves those who are grateful.

Qatadah said: Your Lord bestows blessings and loves gratitude.

Calling upon Allah asking Him to help us to give thanks.

The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ instructed Muadh ibn Jabal to say in supplication (dua) following every prayer: **«Allahumma a'inni ala dhikrika wa shukrika wa husni ibadatika (O Allah, help me to remember You, give thanks to You and worship You properly).»** Narrated by Abu Dawud; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

Outcomes of gratitude (shukr)

1

Attaining the pleasure of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. It was narrated that Anas ibn Malik رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Allah is pleased with a person when he eats something and praises Him for it, or he drinks something and praises Him for it.»** Narrated by Muslim.

2

Salvation from His punishment. In His Book, Allah has explained that He has no reason to punish people if they give thanks and believe in Him. He says: *{Why would Allah punish you if you are grateful and believe? And ever is Allah Appreciative and Knowing}* [an-Nisa 4:147].

3

The blessing will continue and increase. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed, 'If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favor]; but if you deny, indeed, My punishment is severe'}* [Ibrahim 14:7]. Thus blessings increase with gratitude, and are protected against loss. Umar ibn Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said: Retain the blessings of Allah by giving thanks to Allah. Hence one of the scholars called gratitude the retainer of blessings.

Patience (sabr) and gratitude (shukr):

Regarding the verse *{Indeed, We have created humankind in constant struggle}* [al-Balad 90:4], al-Hasan said: Man struggles constantly to show gratitude for times of ease and he struggles constantly to show patience at times of hardship.

One of the early generations (the salaf) said: Faith consists of two halves: half gratitude and half patience.

Ibn al-Qayyim said: Because faith consists of two halves, half gratitude and half patience, it is important for the one who cares for himself, and would like to attain salvation and to attain happiness and well-being, not to ignore these two straightforward principles or drift away from them. He should undertake his journey towards Allah guided by these two principles, so that on the Day he meets Allah, He will cause him to join the people of Paradise.

Mutarrif ibn Abdillah said: To be granted well-being and give thanks is dearer to me than being tested with hardship and showing patience.

The Prophet ﷺ advised us to ask Allah for pardon and well-being; he did not advise us to ask for calamity. But if calamity strikes, the one who is tested may attain a reward greater than the reward of those who are grateful.

Activities

1. **How can we show gratitude through the following acts of worship: fasting – zakat – Hajj?**

.....

2. **A person journeys towards Allah between gratitude and patience. Explain how the believer balances these two qualities.**

.....

3. **What is the lesson you learn from the following hadith: «Look at the one who is below you»?** Narrated by Muslim.

.....

Piety (wara)

Piety (wara) is the foundation of our religion and the foundation of obedience; it is indicative of a person's righteousness. The righteous early generations (the salaf) put a great deal of effort into learning about piety, and it is very important in the modern age in which bribery, the consumption of haram earnings and falling into haram things are all widespread, so that our children may be brought up with honesty and mindfulness of Allah (taqwa).

In linguistic terms, the Arabic word wara (translated above as piety) refers to feeling uncomfortable with something and therefore refraining from it.

In principle, wara refers to refraining from that which is prohibited, but the word is also used to refer to refraining from that which is permissible and halal.

With regard to the use of the word wara in Islamic terminology, Ibn al-Qayyim رحمه الله said: It means refraining from something that one fears may lead to harm in the Hereafter.

It was also said that it refers to refraining from something innocuous for fear of falling into something that is problematic.

Al-Jurjani said: It means avoiding ambiguous matters for fear of falling into that which is definitely haram.

Al-Qirafi said: Wara means refraining from something innocuous as a precaution against that which is problematic.

The basis for this concept is found in several hadiths:

1. It was narrated that the Sahabi Atiyah ibn Urwah as-Sa'di رضي الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«A person will not be regarded as one of those who are mindful of Allah until he gives up that which is innocuous as a precaution against that which is problematic.»** Narrated and classed as hasan by at-Tirmidhi.

2. The hadith narrated by Ahmad and an-Nasai – and classed as sahih by al-Albani – from al-Hasan ibn Ali رضي الله عنهما, who said: I learned from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: **«Leave that which makes you doubt for that which does not make you doubt.»**

3

It was narrated that an-Numan ibn Basheer رضي الله عنهما said: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: **«That which is permissible is clear, and that which is prohibited is clear, and between them are matters that are unclear about which many people do not know. So whoever refrains from unclear matters will protect his faith and his honour, but whoever falls into unclear matters is like a shepherd who grazes his flock around a sanctuary; he will soon encroach upon it…»** Agreed upon.

4

The Prophet ﷺ summed up piety (wara) in its entirety in a single phrase when he said: **«Part of a person's being a good Muslim is his leaving alone that which does not concern him.»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah; classed as sahih by al-Albani. Leaving alone that which does not concern you includes refraining from that which is of no benefit in terms of speaking, looking, listening, striking, walking, thinking and all other actions, both outward and inward.

The importance of piety (wara)

Piety (wara) is a condition of faith and its ultimate outcome, and it is indicative of a person's righteousness.

Tawus رحمه الله said: The likeness of faith is that of a tree: its root is the testimony of faith (shahadah), and its fruit is piety (wara). There is nothing good in a tree that bears no fruit, and there is nothing good in a person who has no piety.

Ibn Umar رضي الله عنهما said: "Do not look at a person's prayer or fasting; rather look at the truthfulness of his words when he speaks, his honesty when he is entrusted with something, and his piety (wara) when he thinks of committing a sin." Narrated by al-Bayhaqi in Shu'ab al-Eeman.

Umar ibn al-Khattab رضي الله عنه said: Religious commitment is not reflected in reciting [with a beautiful voice] at the end of the night; rather religious commitment is reflected in piety (wara).

Mutarrif ibn Abdillah ibn ash-Shikhkheer رحمه الله said: You may meet two men, one of whom fasts, prays and gives in charity more, but the other is far better than him. It was said to him: How is that? He said: He is more pious (wara) and more cautious in avoiding what Allah has forbidden.

A man said to Abu Abd ar-Rahman al-Umari: Advise me. He picked up a pebble from the ground and said: If piety (wara) the size of this pebble enters your heart, that is better for you than the prayers of all the people on earth.

Hence the scholars described piety (wara) as being essential in a judge who judges between people, because the position of a judge is one of the most important positions and roles in this world. It is a position in which the judge must decide between disputants concerning matters of wealth, marriage and divorce, and so on. Therefore they stipulated, with regard to this high position, that the judge should be pious.

Sufyan ath-Thawri رحمه الله said: You should strive to be pious, for then Allah will make your reckoning easy. Leave that which makes you doubt for that which does not make you doubt. Ward off doubt with that which is certain, and your faith will remain intact.

Sufyan ath-Thawri رحمه الله was very pious, to the extent that Qutaybah ibn Saeed said: Were it not for Sufyan ath-Thawri, the concept of piety (wara) would have disappeared.

Musa ibn Hammad رحمه الله said: I saw Sufyan ath-Thawri in Paradise in my dream, flying from palm tree to palm tree, and from tree to tree. I said: O Abu Abdillah, how did you attain this? He said: By means of piety (wara), by means of piety (wara).

The piety (wara) of Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq رضي الله عنه

Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq رضي الله عنه set the best example of piety (wara). Al-Bukhari narrated in his Sahih that Aisha رضي الله عنها said: Abu Bakr had a slave who used to bring him some income, and Abu Bakr used to eat from that income. One day he brought something, and Abu Bakr ate from it. The slave said to him: Do you know what this is? Abu Bakr said: What is it? He said: I told a fortune for a man during the Jahiliyyah. I did not know anything about fortune telling, but I cheated him, and he gave me this. This is what you have eaten from. Abu Bakr put his hand in his mouth and made himself vomit, expelling everything that was in his stomach.

Piety (wara) is the best help in worshipping Allah:

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«O Abu Hurayrah, be pious; you will be the best worshipper.»** Narrated by Ibn Majah; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

Saeed ibn al-Musayab رحمه الله said: "Worship is piety (wara), being cautious to avoid that which Allah has forbidden, and bearing in mind what Allah has enjoined."

The difference between asceticism (zuhd) and piety (wara):

Shaykh Ibn Uthaymeen رحمه الله said, in his commentary on Riyadh as-Saliheen: Asceticism (zuhd – showing little interest in worldly gain) is of a higher status than piety (wara). Piety means refraining from that which is harmful, whereas asceticism means refraining from that which is beneficial. Things fall into three categories: that which is harmful in the Hereafter, that which is beneficial, and that which is neither harmful nor beneficial.

Thus piety (wara) refers to a person's refraining from that which will harm him in the Hereafter, meaning that he gives up what is prohibited.

Asceticism (zuhd) means giving up that which will not benefit him in the Hereafter. End quote.

Hence with regard to that which causes no harm, but will be of no benefit in the Hereafter, asceticism (zuhd) means refraining from it.

The danger of lacking piety (wara):

Ibn Majah narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: **«I surely know some people of my ummah who will come on the Day of Resurrection with good deeds like the mountains of Tihamah, but Allah will make them like scattered dust.»** Thawban said: O Messenger of Allah, describe them to us and explain who they are, so that we will not become of them unknowingly.

He said: **«They are your brothers and from your own people, worshipping at night as you do, but they are the kind of people who, when they are alone, transgress the sacred limits of Allah.»** Narrated by Ibn Majah; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

In Sahih Muslim it is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ mentioned a man who travels a great deal and becomes disheveled and covered with dust, who raises his hands to the heavens (and says), 'O Lord, O Lord,' when his food is haram, his drink is haram, his clothes are haram and he has been nourished with haram, so how can he receive a response?

Piety (wara) is mentioned alongside knowledge:

Abu's-Su'ud رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: Piety and refraining from what Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has forbidden depends on knowing what is halal and haram, on the basis of the Quran and Sunnah.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said, concerning the person who is ignorant: He may fail to do deeds that are obligatory and he may do deeds that are forbidden, thinking that this is piety (wara).

1. It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«I go back to my family, and find a date that has fallen on my mat, and I pick it up to eat it, then I am worried that it may be something that was given as zakat, so I put it down.»** Agreed upon.

2. It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: al-Hasan ibn Ali رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا picked up one of the zakat dates and put it in his mouth, and the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«No, no!»** So that he would throw it away. Then he said: **«Do you not know that we do not eat what is given in charity?»** Agreed upon.

3. The piety (wara) of Zaynab bint Jahsh رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا during the slander (ifk) incident. Aisha رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ asked Zaynab bint Jahsh about my issue; he said: **«O Zaynab, what do you know? What have you seen?»**.
   She said: O Messenger of Allah, I want to protect my hearing and my sight. By Allah, I do not know anything about her but good. [Aisha] said: She was the one who used to compete with me, but Allah protected her by means of piety (wara). Agreed upon.

Means of attaining piety (wara)

Adhering to the Sunnah and refraining from innovation (bidah). Al-Awzai رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: We used to say: No man introduces an innovation (bidah) but piety (wara) is taken away from him.

Acting upon knowledge. Sahl ibn Abdillah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: If the believer acts upon what he knows, it will lead him to piety (wara), and if he develops piety, his heart will be with Allah.

Keeping away from prohibited things. Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: Avoid that which is forbidden to you, and you will be among the most pious of people.

Having a lack of interest in worldly gain (zuhd). Sufyan ath-Thawri رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: I have never seen anyone who was pious but he was in need. The one who does not show indifference to worldly gain will not have the patience to adhere to piety (wara).

Keeping away from that which forms an impediment to piety, such as eating a great deal, indulging in physical desires, greed, talking and arguing a great deal, being concerned with the faults of others, wasting time, and shamelessness. This was summed up in the hadith: **«Part of a person's being a good Muslim is leaving alone that which does not concern him.»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

Activities

1. From what you have studied, discuss the danger of not being pious, with evidence.

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2. How great is this phrase: "rather religious commitment is reflected in piety (wara)"! Based on your own understanding, write about the ways in which piety (wara) is indicative of a person's religious commitment.

.....

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.....

3. Explain, with examples, the difference between piety (wara) and asceticism (zuhd).

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Contentment (rida)

Contentment (rida) is one of the most sublime and most important deeds of the heart, by means of which one may attain a status far higher than the one who tries hard and exhausts himself but fails to attain complete contentment.

In linguistic terms, the Arabic word rida (translated above as contentment) is the opposite of sukht (discontentment). It refers to accepting something and feeling comfortable and at ease with it.

The related word ridwan refers to a great deal of rida. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Their Lord gives them glad tidings of mercy from Him and His good pleasure}* [at-Tawbah 9:21].

In Islamic terminology, rida (contentment) refers to not panicking at any decree from Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Levels of contentment

The level of contentment in a person's heart may vary according to the strength of his faith, and according to the categories with which he is content. The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«He has found the taste of faith who is content with Allah as his Lord, with Islam as his religion, and with Muhammad as his Messenger.»** Narrated by Muslim.

The obligation to be content with Allah and be content with His will and decree:

Imam Ahmad رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said: Ninety of the Tabieen, leading scholars of the Muslims, leading scholars of the early generations and fuqaha of various regions were unanimously agreed that foremost among the teachings of the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, to which he adhered until he died, are: contentment with the will of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, submission to His command and showing patience in accepting His decree.

Ishaq رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said: I was present when a man came to Abu Abdillah Ahmad ibn Hanbal and asked him questions. The man said: O Abu Abdillah, is the most important thing, that the Muslim should fully understand, belief in the divine decree, both good and bad, sweet and bitter, and submission to the command of Allah, and contentment with the decree of Allah? Abu Abdillah said: Yes indeed.

Part of being content with Allah as one's Lord:

Resenting the worship of anyone other than Allah ﷻ. This is the core of Islam. Allah ﷻ says: *{Say, "Is it other than Allah I should desire as a lord while He is the Lord of all things?"}* [al-An'am 6:164] *{Say, "Is it other than Allah I should take as a protector, Creator of the heavens and the earth ...?"}* [al-An'am 6:14].

Loving for the sake of Allah and hating for the sake of Allah. Loving the scholars is part of being content with Allah as one's Lord; loving the righteous and the ascetics is part of being content with Allah as one's Lord; loving those who enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong is part of being content with Allah as one's Lord. Hating the mischief-makers and evildoers is part of being content with Allah as one's Lord.

Part of being content with Islam as one's religion:

Being content with what Allah has prescribed of rulings.

Allah ﷻ says: *{[Say], "Then is it other than Allah I should seek as judge while it is He who has revealed to you the Book explained in detail?"}* [al-An'am 6:114]. *{That is because they followed what angered Allah and disliked [what earns] His pleasure, so He rendered worthless their deeds}* [Muhammad 47:28].

How great is the lie of those who say: "We are content with Islam as a religion," then they refuse to submit to its rulings and decrees and do not accept them. – where then is their contentment with this religion?

Taking the Muslims as allies and friends and regarding the disbelievers as enemies.

One of the forms of not being content with Islam is:

- Being content with the ways, beliefs and customs of the disbelievers, and loving to bring them to Muslim lands, such as nakedness, free mixing and all forms of mischief and evil.
- Promoting secularism and the separation of religion and politics.

Part of being content with Muhammad ﷺ as one's Prophet is:

- That he is more beloved to you than yourself, your spouse, your father, your mother, your children, your friends, and your relatives, and that you would sacrifice yourself, body and soul, for his sake.
- That you love to learn about his biography (Seerah), follow his etiquette, and adopt and emulate his characteristics and you wish to be with him in Paradise on the Day of Resurrection.
- That you accept his rulings, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{But no, by your Lord, they will not [truly] believe until they make you, [O Muhammad], judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves and then find within themselves no discomfort from what you have judged and submit in [full, willing] submission}* [an-Nisa 4:65].
- *{If only they had been satisfied with what Allah and His Messenger gave them and said, "Sufficient for us is Allah; Allah will give us of His bounty, and [so will] His Messenger; indeed, we are desirous toward Allah," [it would have been better for them]}* [at-Tawbah 9:59].
- Adhering to his Sunnah and not drifting away from it by introducing innovations for which Allah has not sent down any authority.

The innovation of the Mawlid and various kinds of adhkar and awraad [words of remembrance of Allah and litanies] and ways of reciting them, and other kinds of innovated acts of worship are not part of being content with him as one's Prophet ﷺ.

Contentment with the divine decree. What is meant is submitting to, and feeling at ease and comfortable with, the decree of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ because all of it is just, good and wise.

The following matters do not contradict contentment with the divine decree:

Feeling pain and sorrow.

In terms of being content with the decree of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ attained the highest status, yet despite that he ﷺ wept when his son Ibrahim died, and he said: **«The eye weeps and the heart grieves, but we do not say anything but that which pleases our Lord. Indeed, O Ibrahim, we grieve for you.»** Agreed upon.

Ibn Hajar رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: The appearance of grief in a person when he is stricken with calamity does not mean that he is not showing patience and accepting [the divine decree], if his heart is at peace.

Speaking of what one is experiencing of calamity, without showing displeasure or anger or complaining. Al-Qurtubi said: It is permissible for a person to speak of what he experiences of pain and sickness, and that does not undermine contentment with or acceptance of the divine decree, so long as that is expressed without displeasure or anger.

Calling upon Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ in supplication (dua), asking Him to grant relief from the calamity. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ tells us about Ayub عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ: *{And [mention] Job, when he called to his Lord, "Indeed, adversity has touched me, and you are the Most Merciful of the merciful"}* [al-Anbiya 21:83].

To attain the level of contentment (rida), it is essential to do the following:

Knowing Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and having certain faith in Him; knowing that He is Most Wise in all that He commands and decrees. Al-Fudayl رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: The people who attain the most perfect contentment with Allah are those who know Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Al-Junayd رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: Contentment (rida) is commensurate with the strength and depth of one's knowledge.

One of the scholars of the early generations was asked: What is the way to attain contentment (rida)? He said: Knowing in one's heart that the Lord is just in what He decrees, and not entertaining any negative thoughts about Him.

Striving to make yourself be patient and training yourself to accept whatever Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ causes you to go through. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{So bear patiently what they say, and glorify and praise your Lord before the rising of the sun and before its setting, and glorify and praise Him during the night and during the day, so that you may be pleased [with the reward that Allah will give you]}* [Ta-Ha 20:130]. Something that will help you to attain that is realizing that there is no option except to be content. The one who is not content will gain nothing in this world or in the Hereafter, in contrast to the one who is content, who will gain the benefits of this world and the Hereafter.

The poet said:

We train ourselves to have goodly patience
Being content with Allah's decree is more appropriate for our nafs

Calling upon Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ in supplication (dua). It was narrated from Zayd ibn Thabit رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ taught him a dua and instructed him to recite it regularly, and to advise his family to recite it every day. In it are the words: **«As'aluka Allahumma ar-rida ba'd al-qada (I ask you, O Allah, for contentment after the decree).»** Narrated by Ahmad and by al-Hakim, who said: Its isnad is sahih.

Outcomes of contentment (rida)

1 Attaining servitude to Allah (ubudiyah) and gratitude (shukr).

Yahya ibn Muadh was asked: When does a person attain contentment? He said: When he commits himself to adhering to four principles in his relationship with his Lord. So he says: "If You give me, I accept; if You withhold from me, I am content; if You let me be, I worship You; if You call me, I respond."

Ibn Awn رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said: Be content with the decree of Allah at times of both hardship and of ease, for that is more effective in reducing your distress and grief, and more effective in attaining what you aspire to in the Hereafter.

2 **Attaining a sense of pride and honour,** and of having no need of others. Ar-Ramahormuzi رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: Whoever takes his share of this world in moderation, being content with his lot, will live an honourable life that is based on contentment and a sense that he has no need of people, and he will have a good life. But whoever looks longingly at whatever he sees of luxury in this world, he will be like an animal that eats its fill, and after it is done it begins eating again, and it does not know anything other than that.

3 **Blessing (barakah) in one's provision, contentment, a way out of hardship, a good life,** and the ability to cope with calamities. One of the early generations said: Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ tests His slave with what He gives him. Whoever is content with what Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ allocates to him, Allah will bless it for him and make it more beneficial. Whoever is not content, what he is given will not be blessed for him.

Aktham ibn Sayfi رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: Whoever is pleased with his lot will enjoy his life, and whoever is content with his situation will have peace of mind.

By means of contentment, a person will be able to rid himself of worry, anxiety, grief, confusion, misery, doubt and feelings of being unsettled.

4 **Admittance to Paradise.** It was narrated from Abu Saeed al-Khudri رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«O Abu Saeed, whoever is content with Allah as his Lord, with Islam as his religion and with Muhammad as his Prophet, Paradise will be due for him.»** Abu Saeed was amazed by that and said: Say it to me again, O Messenger of Allah. So he did that. Narrated by Muslim.

5 **Attaining the pleasure of Allah and being spared the wrath of Allah.** The Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«There is no Muslim who says three times, in the morning and in the evening: Radeetu Billahi rabban wa bi'l-Islami deenan wa bi Muhammadin صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ nabiyyan (I am content with Allah as my Lord, with Islam as my religion and with Muhammad صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ as my Prophet but it will be incumbent upon Allah to make him pleased on the Day of Resurrection.»**

Narrated by Ahmad. Al-Arna'ut said: It is sahih because of corroborating evidence.

It was narrated from Anas ibn Malik رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ, from the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, that he said: **«When Allah loves a people, He tests them, then whoever is content will earn the pleasure of Allah, and whoever is discontent will earn His wrath.»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

6

Forgiveness of sins.

It was narrated from Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas رضي الله عنه, from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, that he said: **«Whoever says, when he hears the muadhdhin, Ashhadu an laa ilaaha illa Allah wahdahu laa shareeka lah, wa anna Muhammadan abduhu wa rasooluhu. Radeetu Billahi rabban wa bi Muhammadin rasoolan wa bi'l-Islami deenan (I bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah Alone, with no partner or associate, and that Muhammad is His slave and His Messenger. I am content with Allah as my Lord, with Muhammad as my Messenger, and with Islam as my religion),' his sins will be forgiven.»** Narrated by Muslim.

7

Contentment is a means of attaining all that is good.

Umar ibn al-Khattab رضي الله عنه wrote to Abu Musa رضي الله عنه, saying: To proceed: all goodness is found in contentment, so if you are able to be content, all well and good; otherwise be patient.

Ibn al-Qayyim رحمه الله said: Following the path of contentment and love will cause a person to travel with speed whilst lying in his bed, and he will go far ahead of his travelling companions [in the journey towards Allah].

Activities

1. **By means of contentment, the believer may attain many great benefits in this world. Speak about that.**

.....

2. **Is grieving for one who has died contrary to contentment? Quote evidence for what you say.**

.....

3. **Being content with the Prophet ﷺ is one of the greatest types of contentment. Explain how introducing innovations is contrary to that.**

.....

Reflection (tafakkur)

The best time spent sitting is time spent in reflection and contemplation. Hence there is a variety of evidence in the Quran and Sunnah which indicates that reflection is obligatory. How delightful, how sweet and how good are such moments for the one who is blessed with that. That includes reflecting on the meanings of the names and attributes of Allah, contemplating the meaning of the words of wisdom spoken by the Prophet ﷺ, reflecting on the Hereafter, and reflecting on that which benefits people in both their religious and worldly affairs.

In linguistic terms, the Arabic word tafakkur (translated above as reflection) refers to pondering and contemplating, thinking over something and re-examining it. This word may be used to describe the process of thinking over a matter and trying to learn from it.

In Islamic terminology, it refers to thinking over evidence and signs, and reflecting on the significance of things, in order to learn.

The most beneficial type of thinking and reflection.

The most beneficial type of reflection is that which leads one to goodness or to some benefit in this world or the Hereafter.

Ibn al-Qayyim said: The best type of contemplation is reflecting on that which will benefit one in the Hereafter and how to attain that, and thinking of how to ward off harm in the Hereafter and how to avoid that. These four things are the best that one may think about, and are followed by another four: thinking about that which will benefit one in this world and how to attain that, and thinking of evil things in this world and how to protect oneself from them. The thoughts of the wise focus on these eight things.

Other matters for reflection and contemplation:

1 **Reflecting on the texts of revelation, verses and comparisons mentioned in the Quran:**

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And We revealed to you the message that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them and that they might give thought}* [an-Nahl 16:44].

{If We had sent down this Quran upon a mountain, you would have seen it humbled and coming apart from fear of Allah. And these comparisons We present to the people that perhaps they will give thought} [al-Hashr 59:21].

2 Reflecting on this world and how soon it will pass away:

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{The example of [this] worldly life is but like rain which We have sent down from the sky that the plants of the earth absorb - [those] from which men and livestock eat - until, when the earth has taken on its adornment and is beautified and its people suppose that they have capability over it, there comes to it Our command by night or by day, and We make it as a harvest, as if it had not flourished yesterday. Thus do We explain in detail the signs for a people who give thought}* [Yunus 10:24].

3 Reflecting on creation:

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And how many a sign within the heavens and earth do they pass over while they, therefrom, are turning away. And most of them believe not in Allah except while they associate others with Him}* [Yusuf 12:105-106].

In Sahih Muslim, it is narrated that the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ got up at the end of the night, and he went out and looked at the sky, then he recited these verses: *{Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding. Who remember Allah while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire"}* [Aal Imran 3:190-191].

Then he went back to the house, cleaned his teeth with the siwak and did wudu, then he prayed, then he lay down, then he recited these verses again, then he cleaned his teeth with the siwak and did wudu again, then he prayed.

An-Nawawi said: This indicates that it is recommended (mustahabb) to recite these verses when waking up at night and looking at the sky, because doing so will prompt one to reflect deeply.

It was said to al-Awzai: How can one reflect on these verses? He said: By reciting them whilst understanding their meaning.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: Looking at creation in the upper realm and lower realm by way of contemplating and reflecting is enjoined and encouraged.

Shurayh al-Qadi رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ used to say to his companions: Let us go out to the marketplace and look at the camels, how they are created.

Similarly, the individual should learn from modern science with regard to contemplation. How many created things there are that our predecessors did not know, but have now become apparent. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And He creates that which you do not know}* [an-Nahl 16:8].

4 Reflecting upon the blessings of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

For example, Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{It is He who sends down rain from the sky; from it is drink and from it is foliage in which you pasture [animals]. He causes to grow for you thereby the crops, olives, palm trees, grapevines, and from all the fruits. Indeed in that is a sign for a people who give thought. And He has subjected for you the night and day and the sun and moon, and the stars are subjected by His command. Indeed in that are signs for a people who reason. And [He has subjected] whatever He multiplied for you on the earth of varying colors. Indeed in that is a sign for a people who remember. And it is He who subjected the sea for you to eat from it tender meat and to extract from it ornaments which you wear. And you see the ships plowing through it, and [He subjected it] that you may seek of His bounty; and perhaps you will be grateful}* [an-Nahl 16:10-14].

5 Reflecting on consequences and the Hereafter.

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Have they not travelled through the earth and observed how was the end of those before them? They were greater than them in power, and they plowed the earth and built it up more than they have built it up, and their messengers came to them with clear evidences. And Allah would not ever have wronged them, but they were wronging themselves}* [ar-Rum 30:9].

It was narrated from Ali ibn Abi Talib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«I used to forbid you to visit graves, but now visit them, for they will remind you of the Hereafter.»** Narrated by Ahmad; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

Mutarrif ibn Abdillah ibn ash-Shikhkheer رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said: "I lie down on my bed at night and contemplate the Quran, and I compare my deeds to those of the people of Paradise, for their deeds are difficult to emulate *{They used to sleep but little of the night}* [adh-Dhariyat 51:17]; *{And those who spend [part of] the night to their Lord prostrating and standing [in prayer]}* [al-Furqan 25:64]; *{Is one who is devoutly obedient during periods of the night, prostrating and standing [in prayer]… [like one who does not]?}* [az-Zumar 39:9]. Then I realize that I am not one of them, so I compare myself to this verse: *{What brought you to hell?}* [al-Muddaththir 74:42], and I see that the people of Hell were deniers and rejecters of truth. Then I come to this verse: *{And [there are] others who have acknowledged their sins. They had mixed a righteous deed with another that was bad}* [at-Tawbah 9:102], and I hope that I and you, O my brothers, will be among them.

Limits to reflection and reservations concerning it:

Reflection has limits at which the Muslim should stop, and he should not overstep the mark when reflecting and go beyond the limits. That includes the following:

The Essence of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and how His attributes are

It is not permissible for the Muslim to think about how the Essence of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ is, or how His attributes are. It was narrated that Ibn Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«Reflect upon the signs of Allah, and do not reflect on Allah Himself عَزَّوَجَلَّ.»** Narrated by al-Lalakai; classed as hasan by al-Albani.

With regard to contemplating the meanings of the names and attributes of Allah, and acting in accordance with their meanings, without inquiring into how they are, this is something that is required and it is what the texts indicate.

The world of the unseen (al-ghayb)

It is not appropriate for the Muslim to think about the world of the unseen and try to imagine it, for the matter is too great to be comprehended by human reason. This is one of the differences between the Islamic perspective and the Western perspective on creation. The atheist Western perspective arrogantly thought that it is possible to subject everything to investigation and experiment, and to find out everything. The Islamic perspective, on the other hand, puts a limit on that, stating that there are things that it is not possible to find out and there are limits that cannot be surpassed, such as: the soul, the world of the jinn, the world of the angels, the grave (i.e., al-barzakh the interval between death and the Day of Resurrection), Hell, Paradise, and the events of the Day of Resurrection. All of these come under the heading of knowledge of the unseen (al-ghayb) which cannot be known under any circumstances. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And they ask you, [O Muhammad], about the soul. Say, "The soul is of the affair of my Lord. And mankind have not been given of knowledge except a little"}* [al-Isra 17:85].

One of the things that are prohibited with regard to reflection:

It is what the Sufis do of giving up religious duties and spending their time on reflection and contemplation. Ibn al-Arabi said: As for the way of the Sufis, whereby one of their shaykhs spends an entire day and night, or even a month, reflecting without ceasing, this is far from the right way; it is not something that is appropriate for human beings and it is not in accordance with the Sunnah.

Examples of reflection among the early generations (the salaf):

When they asked Umm Dharr about how Abu Dharr رضي الله عنه used to worship, she said: He would spend the entire day doing nothing but reflecting and contemplating.

They asked Umm ad-Darda about the best acts of worship done by Abu'd-Darda, and she said: Reflection and contemplation.

Sufyan ath-Thawri رحمه الله was sitting in a gathering when the lamp went out and the room was enveloped in darkness. When they lit the lamp again, they found Sufyan with tears flowing from his eyes, and they said: What is the matter with you? He said: I thought about the grave.

It was said to Ibrahim an-Nakhai: You think a great deal. He said: Thinking is the essence of reason.

Outcomes of reflection

1. **Increased faith.** Khalifa al-Abdi رحمه الله said: By Allah, the believers continue to reflect on the creation of their Lord عز وجل until they attain certain faith in their Lord.

2. **Striving hard for the Hereafter and having little interest in worldly gain.** Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنهما said: Reflecting on what is good prompts one to act upon that, and regretting what is bad prompts one to give it up.

   Ibn al-Qayyim رحمه الله said: This type of reflection will bear fruit in terms of love and knowledge, for if one thinks about the Hereafter and how sublime it is and how it will last forever, and thinks about this world and how insignificant and transient it is, that will bear fruit in the form of a desire for the Hereafter and little interest in this world. The more he thinks about how hope in this life is limited and how short this life is, this will encourage him to strive hard and do his best to make the most of his time.

3 **Fear of Allah and calling to mind His Might and Greatness.** Bishr ibn Harith رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: If the people thought and reflected on the might and greatness of Allah, they would never disobey Allah.

And it was said: Reflection takes away heedlessness and creates fear of Allah in the heart.

4 **Evaluating your spiritual condition and striving to correct any shortcomings.** Al-Fudayl رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: Reflection and contemplation is a mirror that shows you your good deeds and your bad deeds.

5 **Finding ways to help uplift the ummah.** With regard to those throughout Islamic history who called people to Allah and sought to rectify their condition and renew their commitment to Islam, it is certain that the first thing they did was to examine the condition of the Muslims to see what they were lacking, where the problems lay and where they were falling short. Then they rolled up their sleeves and strove hard to uplift the Muslim ummah and bring it back to the path of Allah and what pleases Him.

6 **Academic achievement.** Ash-Shafi'i رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: Seek help to ensure the quality of what you say by pausing and thinking before you speak. In other words, make sure that what you say is important, of value and helps you to reach the right conclusion by means of reflecting and contemplating before you speak.

How did the scholars produce so much good work? How did they write and compile these books? How were these branches of knowledge developed and perfected? Undoubtedly a large part of that was the result of contemplation and reflection.

7 **Turning to Allah, and asking for forgiveness and mercy.** Sufyan ibn Uyaynah always recited this line of poetry:

If a man has the habit of reflection
Then he will learn something from everything

And he said: Reflection is the key to mercy. Do you not see that a person may reflect and it leads him to repent?

The virtue of reflection: reflection is one of the best types of worship.

Abu'd-Darda رضي الله عنه said: "To reflect for an hour is better than standing in prayer all night."

Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنهما said: "Two rakahs of moderate length with reflection is better than standing in prayer all night with the mind wandering."

It was narrated from Muhammad ibn Ka'b al-Qurazi رحمه الله: To recite at night until dawn breaks *{Idha zulzilat (When the earth is shaken)...}* [az-Zalzalah 99] and Surat al-Qari'ah, and no more than that, repeating them and reflecting, is dearer to me than to recite the entire Quran quickly in one night, with no deliberation.

Means of ensuring that one's reflection is sound.

Seeking refuge with Allah from the devils.

Allah عز وجل has instructed us to seek refuge with Him from Iblees before starting to read the Quran, because reflecting and pondering upon the verses of the Quran is one of the most important types of reflection, and seeking refuge with Allah before starting to read the Quran is a means of driving away the Shaytan who whispers and insinuates wrong notions into a person's mind.

Ibn Katheer رحمه الله said: The reason for seeking refuge with Allah when starting to read or recite is so that the Shaytan will not make the reciter stumble in his recitation and make him confused, and prevent him from pondering and reflecting.

Keeping away from sin.

Allah عز وجل says: *{I will turn away from My signs those who are arrogant upon the earth without right; and if they should see every sign, they will not believe in it. And if they see the way of consciousness, they will not adopt it as a way; but if they see the way of error, they will adopt it as a way. That is because they have denied Our signs and they were heedless of them}* [al-A'raf 7:146].

Al-Hasan said, commenting on this verse: That is, I shall prevent their hearts from reflecting upon My commands.

Activities

1. Why is reflecting on the Essence of Allah forbidden, and what is prescribed in that regard?

.....

.....

.....

2. Write briefly about the outcomes of reflection, adding to them from sources other than what you have studied.

.....

.....

.....

3. Mention verses that urge us to reflect.

.....

.....

.....

Taking stock of oneself (muhasabah)

The nafs (self), by nature, is inconstant and fickle; it is vulnerable to outside influences and is easily swayed by whims and desires and diseases of the heart (spiritual ailments). Hence it is prone to drifting away and following its inclinations. In principle, the nafs is inclined to evil, as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, the soul [nafs] is a persistent enjoiner of evil, except those upon which my Lord has mercy}* [Yusuf 12:53]. Hence the nafs poses a serious danger to the individual, unless he manages to restrain it with the reins of mindfulness and fear of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, and leaves it no other choice but to follow the truth.

In linguistic terms, the Arabic word muhasabah (translated here as taking stock of oneself) refers to counting and reckoning.

In Islamic terminology, it refers to thinking about one's deeds, and striving to correct mistakes and to persist in doing righteous deeds.

Al-Mawardi said of muhasabah: It refers to a person reviewing at night deeds that he did during the day; if they were good, he approves of them and follows them with more deeds of that nature and type, but if they were blameworthy, he corrects them if possible, and refrains from doing similar deeds in the future.

Muhasabah (taking stock of oneself) in the Quran, the Sunnah, and the words of the scholars:

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has instructed His slaves to take stock of themselves, as He says: *{O you who have believed, fear Allah . And let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow - and fear Allah . Indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do And be not like those who forgot Allah , so He made them forget themselves. Those are the defiantly disobedient}* [al-Hashr 59:18-19].

As-Sa'di رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: This verse clearly refers to taking stock of oneself (muhasabah) and indicates that the individual should check himself, and if he sees any slip or error, he should correct it by giving it up, repenting sincerely, and avoiding the things that led to that error. If he sees himself falling short with regard to any of the commands of Allah, he should strive hard and seek the help of his Lord in improving and perfecting his deeds.

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And I swear by the reproaching soul}* [al-Qiyamah 75:2].

Al-Hasan said, commenting on this verse: You will not find the believer in any state except questioning his actions and rebuking himself: What was my intention when I said that? What was my intention when I ate that? What was my intention when I drank that? The evildoer keeps going and does not question his actions or rebuke himself.

In the Sunnah, we see the hadith of Shaddad ibn Aws رضي الله عنه, according to which the Prophet ﷺ said **«The smart one is the one who takes stock of himself – in this world before the Hereafter – and strives for that which comes after death. The helpless one is the one who follows his whims and desires and indulges in wishful thinking about Allah.»** Narrated by Ahmad and by at-Tirmidhi, who classed it as sahih.

Taking stock of oneself is one of the deeds concerning which there is scholarly consensus:

Al-Izz ibn Abd as-Salam رحمه الله said: The scholars are unanimously agreed that it is obligatory to take stock of oneself with regard to one's past deeds, in addition to his future deeds.

Types of taking stock of oneself - muhasabah is of two types:

The first type is before doing an action.

This means that the individual should look at the deed and ask whether he is able to do it, in which case he should go ahead and do it, such as fasting and praying qiyam (voluntary prayers at night), or he is not able to do it, in which case he should refrain from doing it. Then he should ask whether there is any benefit to be attained in this world or the Hereafter by doing that deed, in which case he should do it, or his deed will lead to harm in this world or the Hereafter, in which case he should refrain from doing it. Then he should ask whether this deed is for the sake of Allah عز وجل or for the sake of people. If he is going to do it for the sake of Allah, he should go ahead and do it, but if his intention is other than that, he should refrain from doing it.

Al-Hasan said: When one of them wanted to do an act of charity, he would pause and think, then if it was for the sake of Allah, he would go ahead, but if it was otherwise, he would refrain.

The second type is after doing an action.

It is of three kinds:

1. Taking stock of oneself for acts of worship and constantly asking oneself: Did I do this obligatory action in the most perfect manner, sincerely for the sake of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and in accordance with the teachings of the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ? Similarly, in the case of supererogatory actions, he should ask himself: Did you omit some supererogatory actions, or did you fail to read Quran, or did you omit your daily dhikr, or did you fall short in it?

The good outcome of this type of taking stock of oneself is that it helps you to make up for shortcomings and correct mistakes, to hasten to do good and refrain from doing prohibited and evil actions, and to repent from them and offer a lot of prayers for forgiveness.

2. Taking stock of oneself with regard to sins and bad deeds that you have committed: what made you do that? And what would be the case if you had changed your mind before doing that action?

After taking stock of yourself in this manner, you can look at what decision could result from this taking stock of yourself, which is to strive to expiate for that sin. So you can hasten to rectify your situation by repenting sincerely, praying for forgiveness, and doing good deeds that erase sins and remove bad deeds, in accordance with the verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds}* [Hud 11:114].

3. Taking stock of oneself with regard to something you did when refraining from it would have been better than doing it, or with regard to something permissible, asking oneself: Why did I do that? Would it not have been better not to do it? What benefit did I gain from it? Will it increase my good deeds (hasanat)?

Order of priorities in taking stock of oneself (muhasabah):

Ibn al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: The individual should take stock of himself, first of all, with regard to obligatory duties. If he notices some shortcoming, he should try to deal with it, either by making it up or rectifying what he did not do properly.

Then he should take stock of himself with regard to forbidden things. If he knows that he committed such an act, he should deal with it by repenting, seeking forgiveness and doing good deeds that erase sins.

Then he should take stock of himself with regard to heedlessness. If he was heedless with regard to the purpose for which he was created, he should deal with it by remembering Allah (dhikr) and turning to Him عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Then he should take stock of himself with regard to the words he spoke, the places he walked to, those whom he struck with his hands, and what his ears heard, asking himself: What did I intend by these actions? For whom did I do it? How and in what manner?

He should know that every movement or word should be judged on two counts: for whose sake it was done and how it was done? The former is a question about sincerity, and the latter is a question about whether it was in accordance with the Sunnah.

Outcomes of taking stock of oneself (muhasabah)

1. **Salvation and success.** Al-Hasan said: A person will continue to be fine so long as he has a conscience to exhort him and he constantly pays attention to taking stock of himself.

2. **It will make his reckoning easier on the Day of Resurrection.** Umar ibn al-Khattab رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: Take stock of yourselves before you are brought to account, for it will make your reckoning easier. Weigh yourselves before you are weighed, for it will be easier for you. Prepare yourselves for the great examination.

   Al-Hasan al-Basri رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: The believer is in charge of himself, taking stock of himself for the sake of Allah. The reckoning will only be easier for people who took stock of themselves in this world, and the only reason why the reckoning on the Day of Resurrection will be harder for some people is that they acted without taking stock of themselves.

3

Preservation of faith and protection against hypocrisy and evildoing. Al-Fudayl ibn Iyad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: The believer takes stock of himself and knows that he will have to stand before Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. The hypocrite is heedless about his actions. May Allah have mercy on a person who examines himself before the angel of death comes down to him.

4

Finding out about one's shortcomings and faults, and not being deceived by one's good deeds. Abd al-Aziz ibn Abi Rawwad رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: I never did any righteous deeds after which I took stock of myself, but I found that the share of the Shaytan was greater than the share of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

5

Humility before Allah, and knowing the true estimate of oneself. Muhammad ibn Wasi رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ used to say: If sins had a bad smell, no one would be able to sit with me! This was despite the fact that he was one of the greatest worshippers among this ummah.

6

Making good use of one's time. Taking stock of oneself leads a person to make the best use of his time. Ibn Asakir رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ used to say: Abu'l-Fath Nasr ibn Ibrahim al-Maqdisi used to take stock of himself at every moment, and he did not let any time pass without making sure that he did something useful, either writing, studying or reading.

What helps you to take stock of yourself:

1

Having certain faith that Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ sees what is in your heart. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And know that Allah knows what is within yourselves, so fear Him}* [al-Baqarah 2:235]; that is, take stock of yourselves.

2

Knowing that by taking stock of yourself now, you will be spared troubles in the Hereafter. Ibn al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: What helps one to remember that Allah is always watching and to take stock of oneself is realizing that the harder a person strives today, the easier it will be for him tomorrow, when someone else will bring him to account.

3

Thinking about the questions one will be asked on the Day of Resurrection. This guarantees that a person will take stock of himself, turn to Allah, stop being heedless and following whims and desires, follow the truth, commit himself to doing obligatory deeds, give up haram actions, do a lot of recommended (mustahabb) deeds, and stay away from that which is disliked (makruh) or ambiguous.

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all those [one] will be questioned}* [al-Isra 17:36].

{Then you will surely be asked that Day about pleasure} [at-Takathur 102:8].

It is not only the disbelievers and hypocrites who will be questioned; rather the righteous and the Messengers will also be questioned. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{That He may question the truthful about their truth}* [al-Ahzab 33:8]. *{Then We will surely question those to whom [a message] was sent, and We will surely question the messengers}* [al-A'raf 7:6].

4

Remembering the horrors of the Day of Resurrection. Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ wrote to Adiy ibn Arta'ah, saying: Fear Allah, O Adiy, and take stock of yourself before the Day of Resurrection.

5

Remembering death. A man gossiped in the presence of Maruf al-Karkhi رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ and he said to him: Remember the cotton [of the shroud] when they place it over your eyes.

The righteous early generations (as-salaf as-salih) and taking stock of oneself (muhasabah):

It was narrated that Anas ibn Malik رضي الله عنه said: I went out with Umar ibn al-Khattab رضي الله عنه and he entered a garden, and I heard him saying, with a wall between me and him, when he was inside the garden: "Umar ibn al-Khattab, the leader of the believers (amir al-mu'mineen)! Bah! Bah! By Allah, you should surely fear Allah or He will surely punish you!"

He missed praying Asr in congregation, so he gave in charity a piece of land the value of which was two hundred thousand dirhams.

If Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه missed a prayer in congregation, he would spend that entire night in prayer.

One night, Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz رحمه الله delayed Maghrib prayer until two stars appeared, so he manumitted two slaves, even though the time for the prayer had not ended.

Ibn Abi Rabeeah رحمه الله missed the two rakahs of the Sunnah prayer before Fajr, and he manumitted a slave.

The mother of Ibn Awn رحمه الله called him, and he responded, but he spoke more loudly than she had done, so he manumitted a slave.

Activities

1. **How does the following verse form one of the guidelines on taking stock of oneself:** *{O you who have believed, fear Allah. And let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow}* [al-Hashr 59:18]?

.....

2. **Taking stock of oneself leads to immense benefits and outcomes. List them, bearing in mind some of the reports mentioned above.**

.....

3. **How can a person take stock of himself after doing a deed? Explain in detail what you say.**

.....

Relying on Allah (tawakkul)

Relying on Allah is one of the greatest means of attaining success, and it is something that Allah loves and is pleased with. It reflects a high level of affirming Allah's oneness (Tawhid) and it is one of the most important things that a person can do in his journey towards Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, as He says: *{It is You we worship and You we ask for help}* [al-Fatihah 1:5].

In linguistic terms, the Arabic word tawakkul means delegating something to someone else, and relying upon them to do it.

With regard to the meaning of this word in Islamic terminology, az-Zubaydi رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: Tawakkul means relying on that which is with Allah, and despairing of that which is in the hands of people.

Ibn Uthaymeen رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: Tawakkul means sincerely relying on Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ to bring benefits and ward off harm, whilst taking appropriate measures as Allah has enjoined.

Allah urges His believing slaves to rely on Him in numerous places in His Noble Book.

For example, He عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And upon Allah rely, if you should be believers}* [al-Ma'idah 5:23].

{And upon Allah let the believers rely} [at-Tawbah 9:51].

{And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him} [at-Talaq 65:3].

{And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him]} [Aal Imran 3:159].

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says, describing His believing slaves by way of praising and commending them: *{The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts become fearful, and when His verses are recited to them, it increases them in faith; and upon their Lord they rely}* [al-Anfal 8:2].

The status of relying on Allah (tawakkul) in Islam:

Ibn al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: Relying on Allah (tawakkul) is half of religion, and the other half is turning to Him (inabah). Religion is seeking the help of Allah and worshipping Him, so relying on Allah is seeking His help and turning to Him is worshipping Him.

It is one of the essential components of worshipping Allah Alone (Tawhid al-uluhiyah), as is indicated by the verse in which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{It is You we worship and You we ask for help}* [al-Fatihah 1:5].

Relying on Allah (tawakkul) is a condition of faith:

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And upon Allah rely, if you should be believers}* [al-Ma'idah 5:23].

You should understand that whoever delegates his affairs to Allah, and is content with what He decrees and chooses for him, has relied on Him in the true sense of the word. As for the one who delegates his affairs to someone other than Allah, and puts his hope in someone other than Him, he is bound to fail because he is heedless of his Lord عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Ibn Mas'ud رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrated from the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ that he said: **«He who suffers poverty and seeks relief from people, he will not be granted relief; but he who seeks relief from Allah Alone, Allah will soon make him independent of means.»** Narrated by Ahmad and Abu Dawud, and by at-Tirmidhi, who classed it as sahih.

Saying Hasbuna Allahu wa ni'am al-wakeel (Allah is sufficient for us and the best one on whom to depend).

It was narrated that Ibn Abbas رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا said: Hasbuna Allahu wa ni'am al-wakeel (Allah is sufficient for us and the best one on whom to depend). Ibrahim عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ said it when he was thrown into the fire, and Muhammad صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said it when they said: The people have gathered against you, so fear them. But it only increased them in faith and they said: Hasbuna Allahu wa ni'am al-wakeel (Allah is sufficient for us and the best one on whom to depend). Narrated by al-Bukhari.

The importance of taking appropriate measures

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ taught His slaves to take appropriate measures, as He says: *{It is He who made the earth tame for you - so walk among its slopes and eat of His provision - and to Him is the resurrection}* [al-Mulk 67:15].

His Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ also taught us that. It was narrated that Anas ibn Malik رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: A man said: O Messenger of Allah, Should I tie it [a she-camel] up and rely on Allah, or should I leave it free and rely on Allah? He said: **«Tie it up and rely on Allah.»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi; classed as hasan by al-Albani.

As for the one who fails to take appropriate measures, on the grounds that he is relying on Allah, he is helpless, for failing to take appropriate measures is a corrupt notion and is contrary to reason; it is the way of lazy people.

When Al-Imam Ahmad رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was asked about these people who claimed to rely on Allah and said: We will sit here and our provision is incumbent upon Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, he said: This is a corrupt notion! Doesn't Allah say: *{O you who have believed, when [the adhan] is called for the prayer on the day of Jumu'ah [Friday], then proceed to the remembrance of Allah and leave trade. That is better for you, if you only knew. And when the prayer has been concluded, disperse within the land and seek from the bounty of Allah , and remember Allah often, that you may succeed}* [al-Jumuah 62:9-11]?

That does not mean that a person should exhaust himself in taking measures to seek from the bounty of Allah and take on that which he is not able to do. Rather it is sufficient to do what he is able to do, without exhausting himself, whilst having firm resolve and relying on Allah; then he will be able to achieve a great deal.

If a person has no possible means available to him, then he should not forget the greatest and strongest of means, which is calling upon Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ in supplication and seeking His help.

Relying on someone other than Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

This falls into three categories:

- **The first** category is relying on someone else with regard to matters in which no one is able to help except Allah, such as those who rely on the dead and false gods, hoping that they will help them to achieve their aims such as victory, provision or intercession. This constitutes major shirk.
- **The second** category is relying on visible means, such as someone who relies on a governor or ruler with regard to that which Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has given him power over, such as provision, warding off harm and the like. This is a type of minor shirk.
- **The third** category is relying on someone else whom you delegate to do something that he is able to do on your behalf. This is permissible, but you should not rely on him to attain the expected result; rather you should rely on Allah to make easy for him the matter that you yourself or your proxy are seeking to do. This comes under the heading of measures and means that it is permissible to do, but one should not rely on them; rather one should rely on the Creator of the measures and causes, who ordained cause and effect.

Outcomes of relying on Allah:

1. **Being sufficed in all things, being supported against one's enemies, and protection of oneself, one's wife and one's children.** Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{O Prophet, sufficient for you is Allah and for whoever follows you of the believers}* [al-Anfal 8:64].

When Yaqub عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام gave his sons the advice that would protect them, after that he delegated his affairs to Allah, relying on Him, as he said: *{The decision is only for Allah; upon Him I have relied, and upon Him let those who would rely [indeed] rely}* [Yusuf 12:67].

{And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him} [at-Talaq 65:3].

It was narrated from Umar ibn al-Khattab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: **«If you truly relied upon Allah as you should, you would be granted provision as the birds are granted provision; they go out in the morning with empty stomachs and come back in the evening with full stomachs.»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

Al-Hafiz Ibn Rajab رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: This hadith is the guideline with regard to relying on Allah, which is one of the greatest means of attaining provision. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out, And will provide for him from where he does not expect. And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him }* [at-Talaq 65:2-3].

The poet said:

I guarantee to save from harm
The one who does not spend the night calling upon anyone other than Allah for help

2 **The love of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ,** as He says: *{Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him]}* [Aal Imran 3:159].

3 **Admittance to Paradise without being brought to account.** According to the hadith of Ibn Abbas رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا, it was said to the Prophet صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: **«'Look at the horizon.' And I saw a huge multitude of people filling the horizon. Then it was said to me: 'Look here and there on the horizon,' and I saw a huge multitude of people filling the horizon. It was said: 'This is your ummah, and of these people, seventy thousand will enter Paradise without being brought to account. They are the ones who did not ask others to do ruqyah for them, or believe in omens, or use cautery, and on their Lord they relied.'»** Agreed upon.

4 **Protection against the Shaytan.** Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says: *{Private conversation is only from Satan that he may grieve those who have believed, but he will not harm them at all except by permission of Allah . And upon Allah let the believers rely}* [al-Mujadilah 58:10].

It was narrated that Anas ibn Malik رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, concerning one who goes out of his house: **«If he says 'Bismillah, tawakkaltu ala Allah, laa hawla wa laa quwwata illa Billah (In the name of Allah, I rely on Allah, there is no power and no strength except with Allah),' it will be said to him: 'You have been sufficed and protected,' and the Shaytan will go far away from him.»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi and classed as sahih by al-Albani.

5 **Peace of mind, resolve, motivation, and a sense of pride and independence of means.** *{But whoever relies upon Allah - then indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise}* [al-Anfal 8:49].

Ibn al-Qayyim رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ said: If the individual relied on Allah in the true sense of the word to remove a mountain from its place, and it was obligatory for him to move it, he would be able to move it.

Things that are contrary to relying on Allah (tawakkul):

1

Belief in bad omens and pessimism.

The Prophet ﷺ warned against belief in evil omens, as he said: **«Belief in bad omens is shirk.»** Narrated by Ahmad and Abu Dawud with a sahih isnad.

2

Going to sorcerers, fortunetellers, and astrologers to find out about the unseen and the future.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyah stated that when Ali ibn Abi Talib رضي الله عنه wanted to travel to fight the Khawarij, an astrologer said to him: O Amir al-Mu'mineen, do not travel, for the moon is in Scorpio, and if you travel when the moon is in Scorpio, your army will be defeated.

Ali رضي الله عنه said: Rather I shall travel, putting my trust in Allah and relying on Him, and disbelieving in what you say.

So he travelled and was blessed on that journey, and defeated the Khawarij utterly.

3

Wearing and using amulets.

Such as wearing (or hanging up) blue beads or blue eyes ("evil eye" symbol) or amulets that people obtain from liars and charlatans, or hanging some dead animals, on the door of the house, in the car and so on, for the purpose of protecting themselves!

The Prophet ﷺ said, condemning such actions: **«Whoever wears [or hangs up] anything [for protection] will be entrusted to it.»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi and Ahmad. Al-Albani said: It is hasan because of corroborating evidence.

If people wear or hang up amulets and do not rely on Allah, He will leave them to that to which they attached their hopes, and that is sufficient doom.

4

Not taking appropriate measures, such as striving to seek provision.

The Prophet ﷺ said: **«For one of you to take a bundle of firewood on his back [and sell it] is better for him than asking of someone who may or may not give him something.»** Agreed upon.

And he ﷺ said: **«No one ever eats any food better than that which he earns by working with his own hands, and Allah's Prophet Dawud عليه السلام used to eat from what he earned by working with his own hands.»** Narrated by al-Bukhari.

Not seeking medical treatment. The Prophet ﷺ enjoined seeking medical treatment, as he said: **«Seek medical treatment, O slaves of Allah.»** Narrated by at-Tirmidhi; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

And he ﷺ said: **«Allah عز وجل has not sent down any disease but He has also sent down a remedy for it.»** Narrated by al-Bukhari.

Stories of those who relied on Allah:

The Prophet ﷺ in the cave. It was narrated that Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه said: I said to the Prophet ﷺ when I was in the cave: If one of them looks down at his feet, he will see us. He said: **«What do you think, O Abu Bakr, of two, of whom Allah is the third?»** Agreed upon.

The woman and her goats. It was narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: **«A woman went out with some of the Muslims on a campaign, leaving behind twelve goats of hers and her spindle with which she used to make thread. She lost one of her goats and her spindle, so she said: 'O Lord, You guaranteed the one who goes out in Your cause that You would protect him, and I have lost one of my goats and my spindle. I beseech You to restore my goat and my spindle.'»** And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ described how intensely she beseeched her Lord عز وجل. **«The following morning, she found her goat and another like it, and her spindle and another like it.»** Narrated by Ahmad; classed as sahih by al-Albani.

Activities

1. How can one reconcile between trusting Allah and relying upon Him, and taking appropriate measures?

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2. Write a response to those who say that there is no need to take measures, highlighting how foolish and contradictory their thinking is.

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3. Write briefly about things that are contrary to relying on Allah (tawakkul).

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And Allah is the source of strength.

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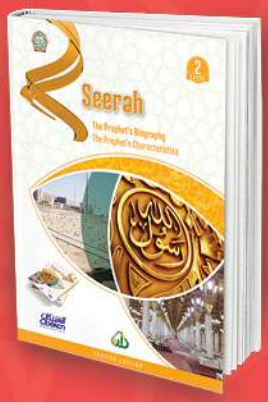

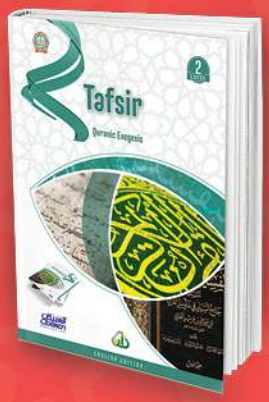

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